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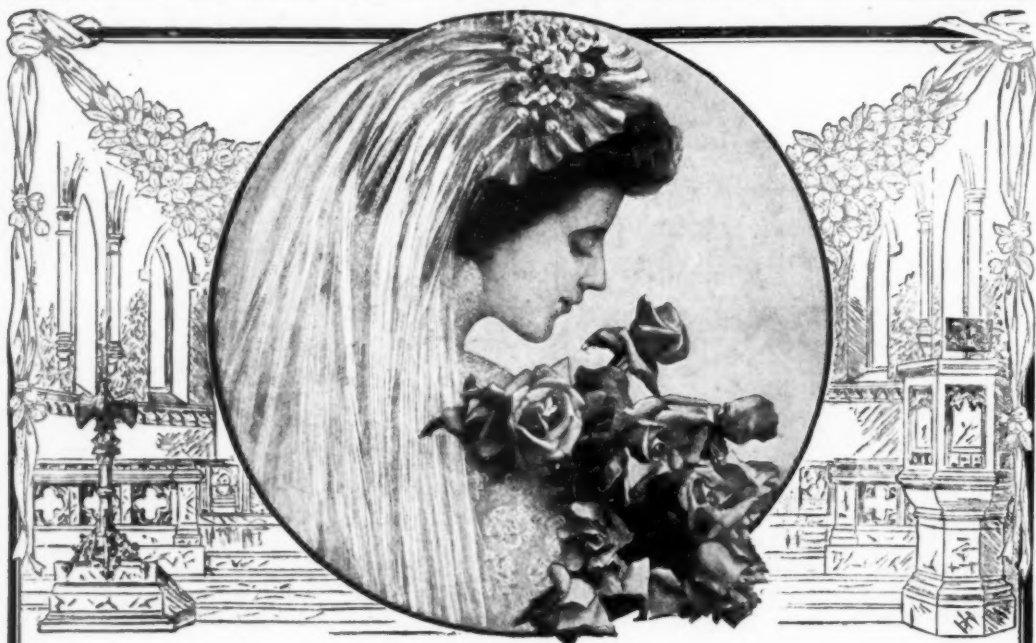
THE  
**RED BOOK**  
MAGAZINE



**THE INTERNATIONAL MARRIAGE THAT FAILE**

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MAY 24 1911

# THE RED BOOK

## MAGAZINE

EDITED BY KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN

### CONTENTS FOR JUNE, 1911

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COVER DESIGN .....	Painted by Jan Attol	
To accompany "Regina"—page 282		
PHOTOGRAPHIC ART STUDIES .....	By {	Otto Sarony Co., New York Frank C. Bangs, New York Felix, Paris James and Bushnell, Seattle
FRONTISPIECE .....	Drawn by Edmund Frederick	
To accompany "Regina"—page 282		
THE OLDEST BEGINNER .....	Gouverneur Morris	225
FROM WIRE FENCES TO ART .....	Illustrated by W. H. D. Koerner	
WARREN—SOLDIER .....	Hugh Johnson	235
HE AWAKENS HIS SUPERIOR OFFICER .....	Illustrated by Hanson Booth	
JANEY DISCOVERS THE GREAT ILLUSION .....	Inez Haynes Gillmore	242
THE TENTH BIRTHDAY PARTY .....	Illustrated by Blanche F. Wright	
THE AROMA OF CIRCUMSTANCE .....	Byron Williams	253
A LIVERY-STABLE PEGASUS .....		
THE SUBSTITUTE .....	Allan Updegraff	257
A SHOT-GUN LOVE AFFAIR .....	Illustrated by F. R. Harper	
"JACKAL" .....	H. B. Marriott Watson	265
A STORY OF SEA THIEVES .....	Illustrated by Hermann C. Wail	
A COOLNESS BETWEEN THEM .....	Fanny Kemble Johnson	275
ONE TOUCH OF ILLNESS MAKES ALL MOTHERS KIN .....	Illustrated by Franklin Booth	
REGINA .....	Emerson Taylor	282
AN INTERNATIONAL MARRIAGE THAT FAILED .....	Illustrated by Edmund Frederick	
THE CORRESPONDENT'S CONSPIRACY .....	Albert Edwards and George E. Holt	290
HOW IT SAVED MOROCCO .....	Illustrated by E. Roscoe Schrader	
BURNED AT SEA .....	Lincoln Colcord	300
THE DAGO IS REVENGED .....	Illustrated by Henry J. Peck	
THE BROKEN CADENCE .....	Margaret Busbee Shipp	311
LOVE TOUCHED THE STRINGS .....		
THE TOWERMAN .....	Edward Hungerford	317
HE MAKES THE GREAT SACRIFICE .....	Illustrated by Monte Crews	
THE ACKNOWLEDGING OF EARL .....	Frances A. Ludwig	328
A LITTLE EPIC OF THE SHIPPING-ROOM .....	Illustrated by B. Cory Gilbert	
WHELAW OF THE ARCTIC .....	Alvah Milton Kerr	339
THE STORY OF A HEAVEN SHAMAN .....	Illustrated by Gayle Hoskins	
THE DESERTERS .....	Harry Allyn	358
THEIR COUNTRY'S DEFENDERS PRO TEM .....	Illustrated by Horace Taylor	
SPRINGTIME IN THE THEATRE .....	Louis V. De Foe	369
STORIES OF THE NEW METROPOLITAN PLAYS .....	Illustrated from photographs	

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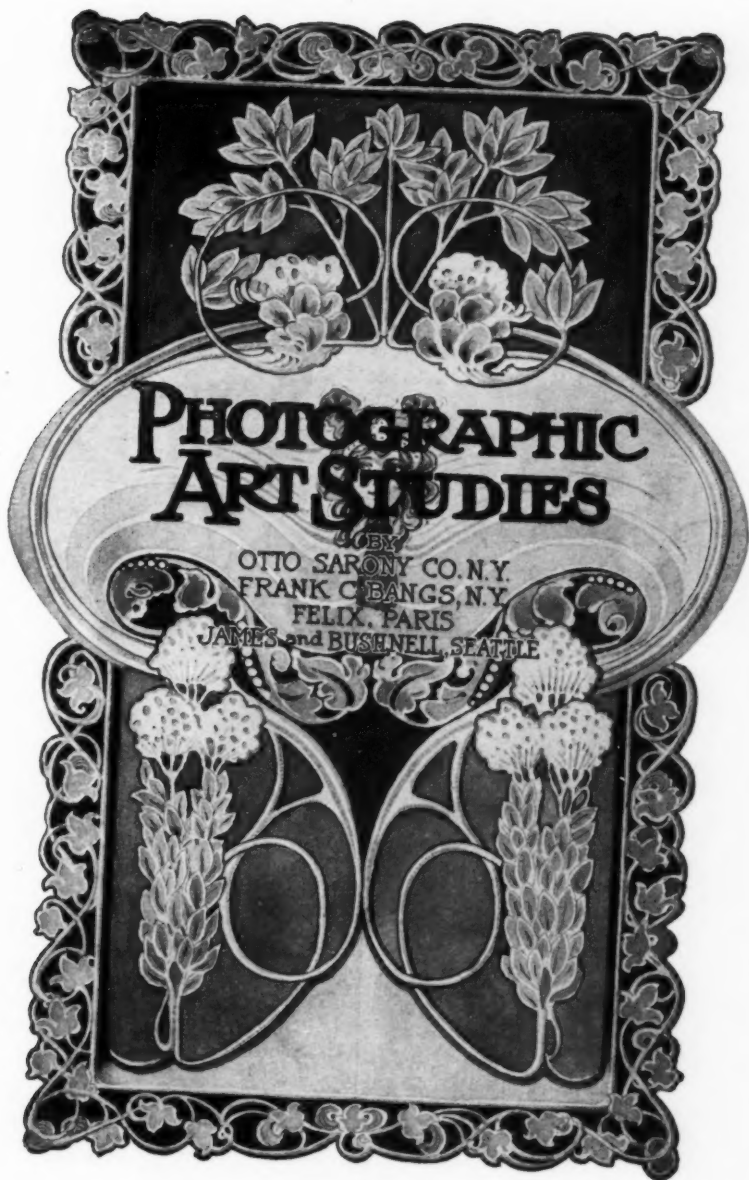
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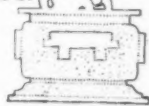
MISS EFFIE SHANNON  
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in "Havana"

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"BONITA"  
in Vaudeville

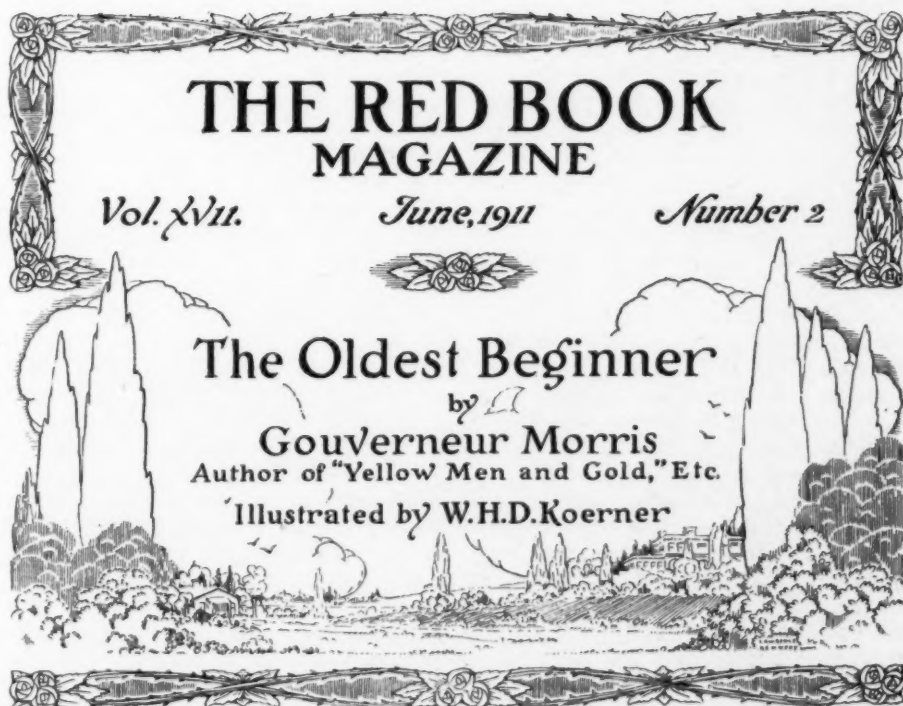
Photograph by James & Bushnell, Seattle





A laugh leaped from her as the trees rushed past

To accompany "Regina"—page 287



# THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

*Vol. XVII.*

*June, 1911*

*Number 2*

## The Oldest Beginner

by

**Gouverneur Morris**

Author of "Yellow Men and Gold," Etc.

Illustrated by W.H.D. Koerner

IT'S hard to believe that old Nicholas Harrigan *always* loved pictures. But we have his own word for it. In the days when he was secretly manufacturing and selling wire-fencing, (under another man's borrowed patent) skipping from one state to another, dodging summonses, and hiding from sheriffs, he loved pictures.

In a certain mission in California, high up on the wall, there was a very black painting of Judas Iscariot counting over thirty very dirty pieces of silver. People used to remark on the excessively life-like rendering of this Iscariot's bulbous nose. "It actually seems to stick out from the canvas," said they. And owing to the pressure from within of a metal knob, it actually did stick out. If you pushed it with your thumb it gave, the metal knob moved, a bolt drew, and you could swing the picture inward like a door. Then you could step from the ladder, which had enabled you to reach the

Iscariot's nose, straight into a bed-room, with a comfortable bed, and a wash-stand and a narrow window and a fire-place and a writing desk—and a closet, and a corridor, eighteen inches wide, that terminated at the back of a canvas (representing Susannah and the ten Elders) which hung, or hinged rather, in the Father Superior's work room. It was in this secret bed-room that Nick Harrigan lived while he grew the beard, which together with a change of name, sufficed to disguise him for as many years as were needed to make a perfect barrier between the law and himself. No wonder he loved pictures—even black ones. He carried from his hiding place a refreshed spirit, a hidden face, and a beautifully carved tortoise shell comb that he had found under the wash-stand in his secret room. He left behind in the care of the good monks, a promise of much money. This promise he kept. But his love of pictures was deeper than was to be accounted for

by the fact of the two very mediocre ones having kept him out of trouble. He has said that it was actually his boyhood ambition (fairly steady except for troubling yearnings toward street-car conducting) to be an artist. Means, however, were lacking. And in drawing he had not the least natural ability. So he put himself in line with the great American work of turning an honest penny, a dishonest penny, or any kind of a penny that could be turned. His amassing of a great fortune may be divided into the usual periods. First, hard work, during which his intellect budded; second, what must be called by the short, ugly word—theft (during this period the budding mind flowers—bearing a blossom somewhat resembling dog-bane); third, transactions within the law of the land, and quite without the law of morals—(here the petals fall and the fruits begin to set). And, fourth, immense ventures and combinations, not even shady and often tinged with a kind of patriotism—(and the great tree of knowledge, and experience, hope and despair, the man's mind, is brightly hung with sound red fruits).

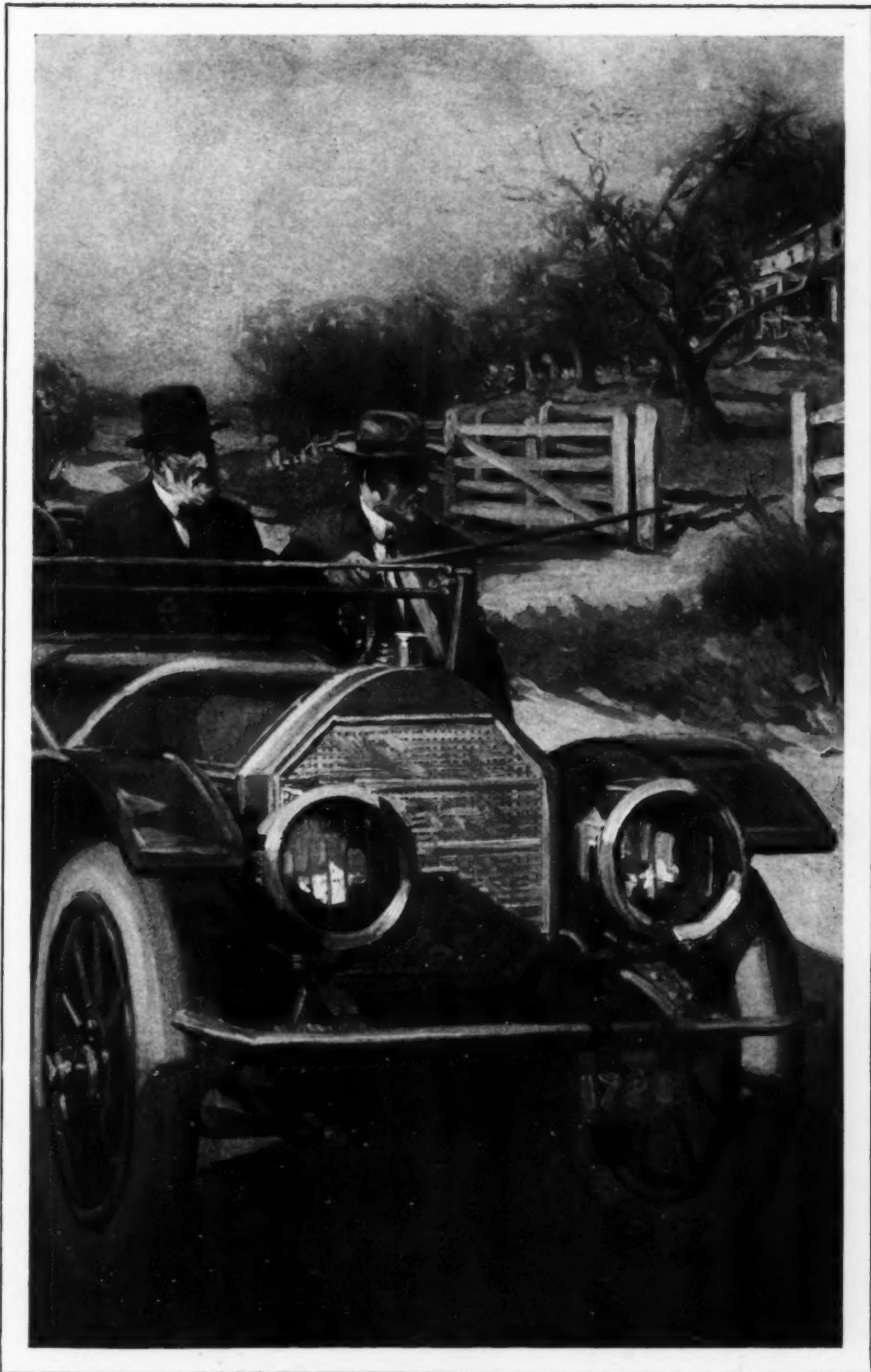
Harrigan loves to tell people that he is a self-made man: he loves especially to inflict this statement upon University graduates—whom he surpasses in grammar, accent, vocabulary, the coordination of parts, down-right book knowledge, and the ability to do sums, as surpassingly as a swan surpasses a blind puppy in the act of swimming strongly and gracefully. Harrigan, sure of his millions and his prestige, loves to boast. But his is an artful form of boasting. It is the boasting of the boaster who can "produce the goods."

Nowadays of course, Harrigan's word is as good as his bond. And he has been forgiven his crimes. People revel in the genial sunset glow that emanates from the old man in his declining years. He no longer takes an active part in affairs, but as recently as the panic of nineteen seven, he attended all the midnight sessions of the powers, and by his equitable, benign and reverend appearance did not a little to pacify warring factions, and to pour soothing balm on systems of raw, rasping nerves.

He has said in print—"Great accumulations are their own self-evident excuse;" and certainly in his own case there is now left only a hot-headed writer (desperately poor) here and there, to point the finger of scorn. The United States themselves are the most perfect example of great accumulations being their own excuse.

We are honest farmers but we do our farming on stolen land. I'm afraid there's no doubt of it. To which you answer that the aboriginal owners were a low and inferior people. And so they were: not even strong enough to hang on to their own property—(the miserable wretches!) And we've got it—call it "conquest" if you like, though that isn't what you call it when the man with the black mask disappears out of your second story window with your wife's pearl necklace (which she forgot she had laced between her corset and herself when she swore to the custom house man that her fourteen trunks contained exactly one hundred dollars worth of foreign-bought goods—and "oh yes, a pair of sleeve links for my husband, that cost twenty-five dollars.") As I say, "We've got it." Never mind the original stealing; that's all over. And even if we became conscience stricken we couldn't give the goods back; for one way and another we murdered most of the victims, and those that are left are dying or drunk or playing foot-ball for gate receipts. We've got it, and we've forgiven ourselves for the how of the getting. And all we can do now is to continue in our march of progress toward honesty in the individual and honesty in the parties politic—so that in the end the initial sins may be wiped out. Two or three thousand years is not a long time to wait; we shall yet see honesty, patriotism, and kindness more prevalent than their opposites.

And all this perhaps is a long and roundabout way of insisting that old Nicholas Harrigan always loved pictures. You see his career—on a small scale—has so many parallels to the history of the country, of which he is so distinguished a citizen, and his absorbing love of pictures—beautiful pictures—seems to me a kind of prophesying par-



"I'm going to buy these people out if it busts me!"

able of the future toward which human thought (all unknown to itself) is slowly drifting.

If it isn't drifting toward some such future—then let the God who made us, save us, for it isn't in us to do it for ourselves.

## II

Nicholas Harrigan often paid fifty or sixty thousand dollars for a picture, and the United States read of it, next morning, in the papers, and was proud to think that a self-made fellow citizen should be despoiling Europe of its art treasures; and that was all the good the purchase did the United States: they would turn again to the instant need of things, making money, over-eating, starving, murdering and begetting. The Picture itself would be carried into the Harrigan gallery, hung—and that was the end of it. A few of the old man's friends saw it, now and then, but you and I didn't. And meanwhile another Harrigan purchase would startle us with pride and another great canvas would disappear as effectively as Blue-beard's new wives used to.

One day Harrigan was motoring in the neighborhood of his celebrated model farm near Westchester, N. Y., and he found a little box of a place with a little box of an old farm-house on it, that bit into a corner of his own fields, and had annoyed him ever since he first saw it. Men of great wealth love symmetry. They don't like a slice of bread with a bite gone, and they like their model farms to stand four-square and complete, to the envy and despair of all small competitors.

But the two acres in question annoyed Harrigan, not because he didn't own them, but because they were so unfinished looking. The people who lived there (he saw the face of a child at an attic window) had begun to paint the house white; and they had run out of paint or money. It was the same with the little garden. This looked to have been laid out to a careful plan; but it had been neglected and was a greater show of weeds than flowers. Old apple trees, full of dead wood, stood here and there. The

turf under them was rank and coarse and needed a hair-cut in the worst way. One apple tree had received painstaking surgical treatment. All the dead wood had been sawed out, and the scars painted over, rot-holes had been filled with cement, and the trunk and main limbs had been scraped and cleaned.

Harrigan told his chauffeur to stop. And as he descended a little stiffly from the car, he said cheerfully—"I'm going to buy these people out, if it busts me."

His next remark was to himself. It was occasioned by the first sight of the lady of the house, when she opened its battered, old, front door to him: "I never knew," he said, "that they made them so young looking nowadays."

Children peered at him from behind the little lady. The group in the narrow little, dark hall made him think of a pot of flowers. Harrigan, who loved pictures, forgot the reason for which he had come, and he said simply (meanwhile racking his brain to remember the people's name) —"We're such near neighbors, I thought it was high time for me to call—Mrs. Schuyler."

"That's awfully good of you, Mr. Harrigan," said she. "I'm so glad. I'll call Jeff."

"What!" exclaimed the magnate. "Your husband's not gone to town today?"

"No, poor soul," she said. "He hasn't been going to town for six months."

It was obvious that it cost her an effort to smile.

"Not ill!" said Mr. Harrigan. "I hope not ill!"

A secretive expression came into her eyes and went. Such an expression nearly always comes in a woman's eyes just before she begins to tell a man all she knows.

"Don't you think," she said, "that everything—outside—looks as if the master was ill? Run away, babes, and tell father that Mr. Harrigan—Har-ry-gan—is here, and ask him if he feels well enough to come down."

A few minutes later the two children were peering shyly into the little drawing room, and shaking their heads.

"Then you run along out," said their



mother, "and mind you don't make a noise under father's window."

The mother turned to Harrigan.

"I'm sorry," she said. "But I know he'd come down if he felt that he ought to. He's—" her eyes filled with tears.

"I know you want to be with him," said Harrigan. "I've chosen the worst time possible to call. You just send me away now, but promise that you'll let me come again. You see we are such near neighbors." But he didn't move, and went on talking. "I used to see Mr. Schuyler in the train—often," he said. "Lately I've missed him. I've never had the pleasure of meeting him; but I knew of him through Moore and Trapp—they thought the world of him—said he was a brilliant young fellow."

"A lot of good it does to be brilliant," said Mrs. Schuyler, "when you overdo it, and break down, and can't go on. All he wanted was just me and the babes, and a little box in the country. That isn't much to ask of yourself if you're brilliant—and now it looks as if we would all have to go to glory."

She knew that it was in bad taste to tell her troubles to a stranger, but she was so full of them and so young, and so discouraged that she couldn't help herself.

"He was born in this house," she said, "and it was sold over his mother's head, and he always vowed he'd have it back, and live in it, and he put himself through college, and worked up and up until he had a splendid position, and me and the babes, and the old house, and then he broke down."

"Rest," said Mr. Harrigan soothingly, "is a wonderful thing."

"How can a poor man rest," said she, "when he isn't earning anything? And how can he get well?"

"Anything wrong beside over-work?" asked Harrigan.

She didn't name the dreadful name of it, but she said:

"He has to sleep out of doors, and rest his body and his mind all the time, and try very, very hard to get well."

"Good God, Madame," said Mr. Harrigan, "don't tell me that your husband has gone into a consumption."

She did not answer; she burst into tears, then sobs.

Presently there was a sound of quick steps on the stairs, and a tall specter of a man, in a dressing wrapper of blue toweling; his thin, wasted face flooded, you may say, with tenderness and concern, he burst into the room, and caught the sobbing little wife in his long, skinny arms, and murmured over her, utterly oblivious of Harrigan's presence. But when she had recovered control of her nerves, he turned to Harrigan, and said ever so gently:

"She gets so discouraged about *me*. But I tell her don't worry; everything's bound to come right somehow."

The picture the young man made, so brave, so unfortunate, and so loving, was one that Harrigan never forgot.

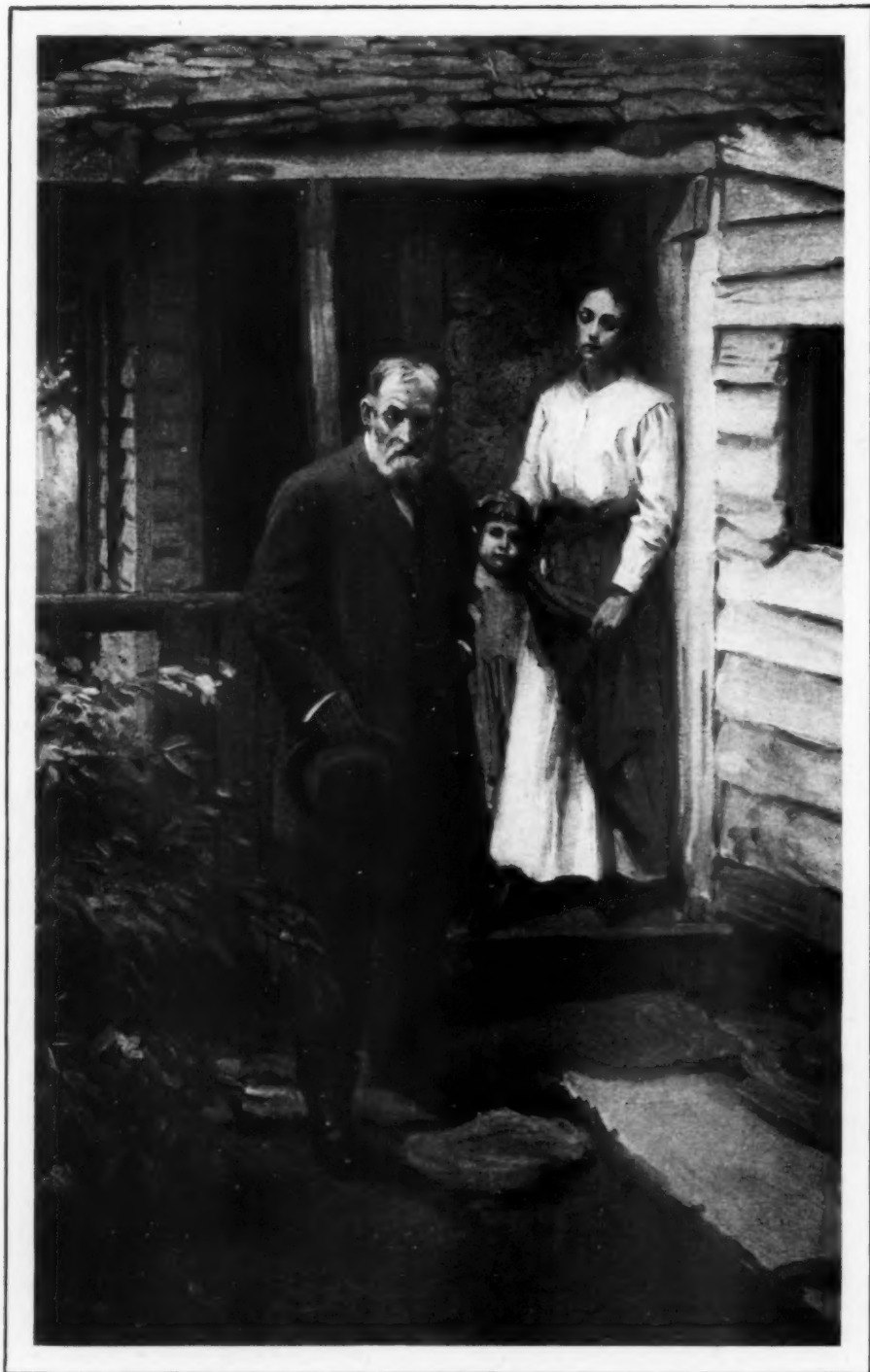
He managed to say something that was pretty nearly the right thing to say, and after a moment or two of awkwardness, he managed to escape out of the house.

"What luck, Sir?" asked the chauffeur.

"Good," said Mr. Harrigan, "I hope. Home—slowly. I want to think."

### III

You may think his mind turned to ways and means for alleviating the misery and distress to which he had just been witness. If so, it was about as indirectly as possible. His thoughts ran upon a picture, that great Rembrandt—"The Polish Knight." You probably know it in the reproductions; a dark, chilled man, on a rough, hairy, bony pony, traveling between dusk and night, across dark, cold hills meeting far off, in a strange, subdued blaze of golden light. The picture had hung for a century in the King's palace of a certain central European Kingdom, whose name I forget. But the Kingdom had just turned republic—rising on one fine night of stars, slitting the king's throat, the throat of the king's concubine, and that of their illegitimate son, and pitching the precious, chinless trio out a palace window: and the young republic having everything necessary to a perfect democracy except funds, had offered the contents of its museums and ex-palaces to the highest



After a moment or two of awkwardness he managed to escape out of the house

bidder. When this intelligence went out privately and secretly from the young Republic's secretary of foreign affairs to all art lovers the world over who were likely to bid high, Harrigan determined to own "The Polish Knight," and to hide it away in his gallery. Through his European agent he had offered a quarter of a million dollars; the secretary of foreign affairs answered that if he knew anything of young republics, and he thought he did, the picture was worth three hundred thousand dollars, and not a cent less.

Said Harrigan to his secretary—"The dirty, black-hearted little half-breed is trying to stick me. 'The Polish Knight' is a painting that I am going to forget."

But he couldn't forget it. He had seen it once. There was an expression about the homely, beautiful face of the Knight which could not be forgotten. What was any sum of money in comparison with a set of facial muscles, so artfully twitched? He looked at the picture from another point of view, and remarked to his secretary: "If I'm any judge of distances, the background of that picture represents at least a hundred thousand acres of land—wild land, and only suitable for a sporting estate, but land, grand land; so that for a fine sporting estate, full of partridge, rabbit, deer, bear and aurochs, I'd only be paying three dollars an acre; that's the way to look at these things!"

He cabled an offer of two hundred and seventy-five thousand. The answer was three hundred thousand, take it or leave it (or punctilious words to that effect) and Harrigan decided once and for all not to buy. He hated to be cheated. Which was natural, because the more a man has cheated others, the more he hates to be cheated by them. He had no sooner determined not to buy, than he determined to buy. Every morning he was against the proposition; every evening he was for it. And then he paid his visit to the Schuylers, and came away thinking about the great Rembrandt, and making greater efforts to put it behind him than he ever had made with Satan.

"It's a shame," said he to his chauffeur, "that some people should want money so badly."

"Did they accept your offer?" said the chauffeur.

"I didn't make them any offer," said Harrigan. "I was thinking upon the general proposition of wealth and poverty. Sometimes I think that I should like to be a philanthropist—if I only knew how."

"I guess it's practice does it," said the chauffeur, "and if at any time you'd want a subject to experiment on—"

"You!" exclaimed Harrigan. "Just God, man! You and your kind were born to the purple, and roll in the yellow: you belong to the race of super-man, a race intolerably proud and mighty."

The chauffeur cut out the muffler, and heard no more. He dreaded lest a sudden flow of details should wipe him as it were from the map of graft and greed. He got hold of more money in the course of a year than the secretary of foreign affairs who was trying to sell "The Polish Knight."

When Harrigan entered his many-columned house on the hill, his mind was made up. He had turned for solace in his old age to the first ambitions of his youth.

"Damn this acquisitive spirit," he said to himself. "I own some fine pictures, but the next picture I admire will be one I painted myself. And it'll give cards and spades to all the other canvases in my gallery."

Then he wrote a cable, in his own hand, to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

Dear Sir: During the year you'll beg me to take The Polish Knight off your hands at my first offer but I shall decline with thanks.

Harrigan.

And this, by the way, was genuine prophecy.

Then Harrigan rang for his secretary and told him to "get hold" of the most "discreet and expensive" private detective in New York City.

Three hours later Mr. Addison Flagg was announced.

Mr. Addison Flagg's business was not so much the detection of crime, as the running to earth and capturing of lost facts and bits of information. He did not belong to the purely literary school of deduction, but to the school from which

statisticians are graduated. The most of his adventures took place in reference libraries, government bureaus and traveling agencies. To find out all there was to be known about the Jefferson Schuylers took him precisely three days. And most germane to Mr. Harrigan's charitable intentions, he discovered among Schuyler's relatives a lost, strayed or stolen Uncle.

This gentleman, Addison Flagg traced to Sydney, from Sydney to the uttermost jumping-off-place mining camp of all Australia, and from there into the bush, with a gang of natives and a strong lust for gold.

"And, Mr. Harrigan," he said, "there is no good reason to think that he ever came out of the bush, alive or dead."

"You think—?" murmured Harrigan.

"I do," said Addison Flagg. "The whole of human experience seems to point in this unfortunate gentleman's case, to a kettle, a pinch of pepper and salt and possibly a suspicion of wild garlic."

"And he was a bad lot?"

"Very."

"And properly hated by his family?"

"Very properly."

"He was a bachelor?"

"There are no records to show the contrary."

"He was eccentric?"

"Crazily—at times."

"News of his dying peacefully with his boots off would hurt no one?"

"No one, Mr. Harrigan."

"Well, Flagg, I'm mightily obliged to you. And I need not warn you to be quiet about this; because in a way you are compounding a sort of crime."

Mr. Harrigan dismissed Mr. Addison Flagg with a handsome check. And then he sent for a lawyer—an amiable, clever, secretive, upright man, who would stop at nothing.

#### IV

"This month, Dearie," said Jefferson Schuyler to his wife, "we must face the music. Bring me all the bills you can find open and unopened. The first thing"—he went into a paroxysm of coughing—"the

first thing is to know just where we stand, in just how deep a hole. Then we must sell our ho—this place,"—he turned his face away so that she should not see it—"get square with the world and live as long as we can on what's left."

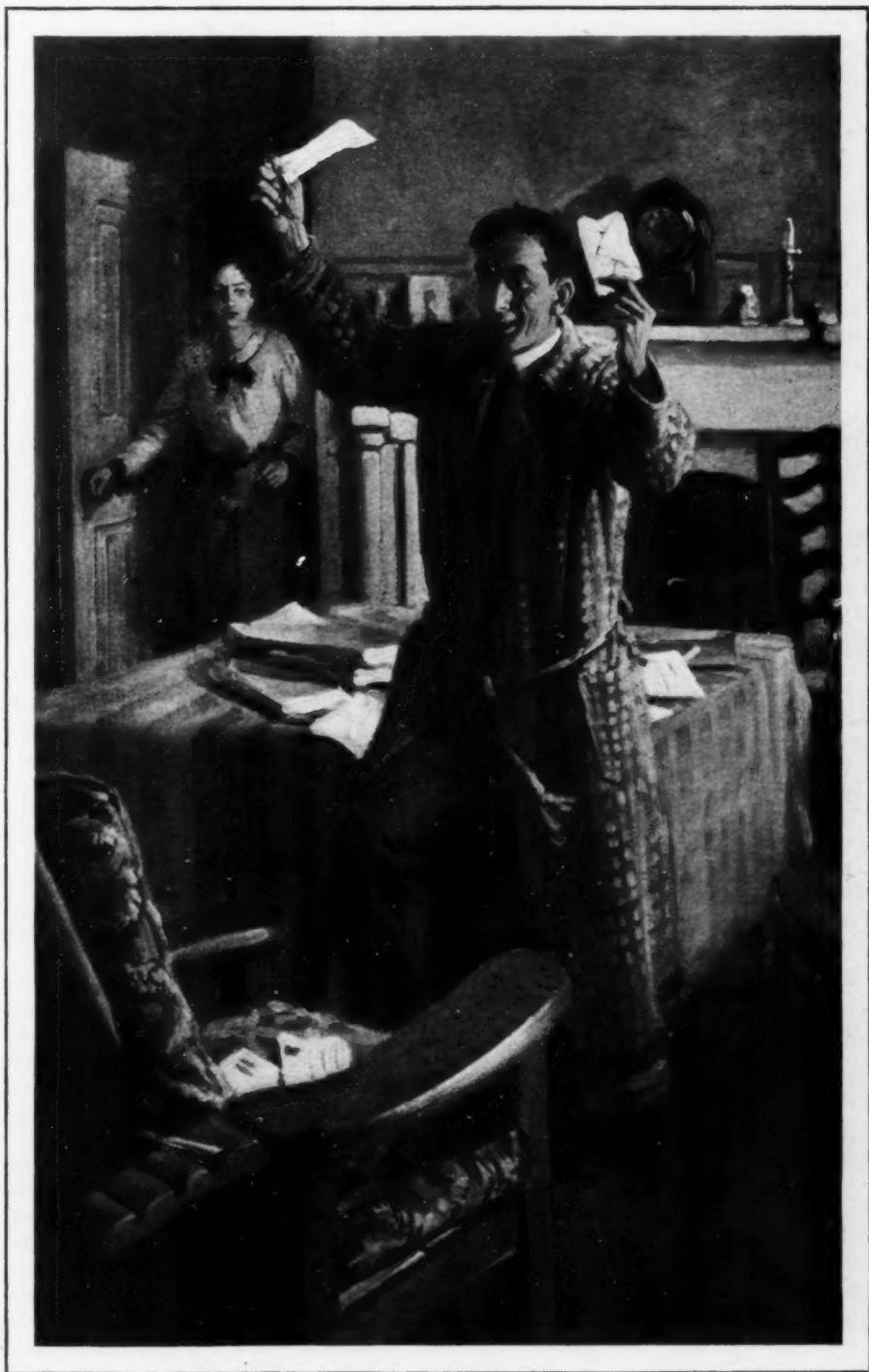
"You'll only worry yourself sick," said Mrs. Schuyler. But he was insistent, and she brought him all the bills, and the new heap from the tin post-box at the front gate, which the rural deliverer had just filled—as was his ugly custom on the first of each month. Then Schuyler asked to be left alone with his tormentors; and Mrs. Schuyler left him and took some sewing to a front window, and sat (quite idle) and watched the world go by. It was a Saturday, and in all the bitterness of poverty and hard luck, she watched the passing of automobiles. There was a steady stream of them—red, white, blue, green, yellow, gray and brown, low priced cars, high priced cars, familiar, gossipy cars, and the haughty, noiseless cars of the magnates. Mr. Harrigan's open black machine passed four times, slowly—twice going and twice coming. At each passing Mr. Harrigan bent puzzled brows upon the Schuylers' house.

"Oh my God!—my God!" thought poor Mrs. Schuyler, "how happy he could make us with a stroke of his pen—but all he thinks of is pictures—*pictures!*"

A few moments later she heard her husband crying aloud to her; but whether in joy or pain it was impossible to tell. She rushed to him. She thought he was dying. It was worse: he had gone mad. He was dancing. He had a sheet of paper in his hand, and was waving it like a flag of glory. He was not a swearing man, but strange oaths were leaping from his lips like explosions from the muzzle of a Maxim. When he saw his wife he cried—"Three weeks!—Three weeks!—Three weeks!—Three weeks!—"

To show what curious things happen in moments of excitement, Mrs. Schuyler found herself trying to say—"You haven't been reading that dreadful book!" But she failed in the effort, and her husband, always waving the paper, went on—"It's been here three weeks, and we thought it was a dun, and we never opened it, we never opened it!"





He had a sheet of paper in his hand and was waving it like a flag of glory

"Never opened what?"

"This!"—He waved the paper.

"What is it?—Give it to me!"

He became suddenly quiet and anxious.

"If it isn't *true*!" he said.

"Jefferson Schuyler, what in goodness has got into you?"

"Trifles—Trifles," he said. "Words—words."

Then he thrust the paper into her hand, and sat down, as if exhausted. But he didn't cough. She noticed that. Usually when he was exhausted, he did.

The paper was a letter from Mr. Harrigan's lawyer. It told Schuyler of his late uncle's demise, and of a legacy of three hundred thousand dollars, that awaited Schuyler's disposition.

"Three hundred thousand dollars," said Mrs. Schuyler in a very small voice.

"Is that what you read? Oh Jeff—Jeff—it's a lot of money."

"It's a *lot* of money to *us*. Old Harrigan on the hill would think nothing of giving three hundred thousand dollars for a picture; but it's a lot of money for us. For us it means all that money can buy."

His eyes leapt.

"It means health!"

Her eyes were very soft.

"An end of worry!"

His jaw set.

"Fresh paint!"

She clasped her hands.

"Chintz!"

He chuckled.

"Rugs!"

Her fingers closed on his arm.

"The new bathroom!"

He dashed his hand across his eyes.

"Flowers in the garden!"

And Schuyler turned upon her a grave, beautiful, smiling face.

"It means," said he, "the power to help others a little here and there; 'cause we know so well what it is to need help."

# V

Mr. Harrigan, passing often in his open black car, amused, touched, observant, watched the picture that he had conceived take shape and come into being. He saw carpenters shaping an outdoor sleeping balcony for Schuyler; he saw men with saws cutting out the dead wood from the apple trees; he saw formerly groggy fence posts, standing up straight, proud of their fresh, white paint. He saw great piles of weeds that had been torn from their happy hunting grounds in the garden. And he saw—well, not neatness and order, but that tremendous busy mess which immediately precedes it. One day he called. He was delighted, he told Mrs. Schuyler, to see that things looked more prosperous with her and hers. When it came to planting the garden, it would charm him to send her some roses. Mrs. Schuyler thanked him prettily. Then that secretive look which precedes unbosoming, came into her eyes, and she admitted that:

"Yes. Jeff has come into a little money. And oh, Mr. Harrigan it is so—so *good* for him to feel easy in his mind. I know he'll get well now, I just know it."

The following winter Harrigan sold his pictures. He explained to his secretary that he needed the money to buy paints with. The secretary attributed this explanation to an unfathomable sense of humor, or to insanity.

But Harrigan was in earnest. His first picture was such a success in his eyes, that he devoted the rest of his life to painting others. He works in secret, with much fantasy and humor. His favorite method is killing off forgotten uncles. And he looks with a certain contempt on the rich men, his contemporaries, who have yet to learn what it means to subsidize people whom one has actually seen with his own eyes.





"Why, you aint mad, are you, Cap?"

## Warren—Soldier

BY HUGH JOHNSON

Author of "The Dam," "The Lamb Rampant," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HANSON BOOTH

FOR some reason—recorded I trust, in the files of the Department—we were sent to fester at Almon Annac. Annac was twenty miles from the railroad, twenty miles from the ocean, and—the men said—only two miles and a half from Sheol. There was an old nipa post there, and we moved into tumble-down quarters and proceeded to endure life.

You can't tell when, where or how a man may turn over a new leaf in his per-

sonality—there are several different men in every man jack of us, and our army in the Philippines has demonstrated the fact more fully than all the hypnotists in the business. Carson and Warren gave us two of the various cases Annac brought out, but Carson's was the one that makes the story worth telling; Warren's, poor devil, was like many another enlisted man's.

If ever a man looked as if he were

shaped, finished and tagged, it was Captain Carson. And the final product was mightily admired, too. He had been in the Service a long time, and was a Superior Being: not supercilious, not cadish nor puffed up greatly in his own conceit—he was a good fellow all right; I've seen him standing on the one billiard table of an entire province and leading the class yells of seventeen West Point classes—representatives of the same joining in to celebrate the meeting. Nevertheless he was a Superior Being, and the fact was awesomely patent in all speech with enlisted men, on all official occasions, and also in poker games. It came out in the way he set his jaw, narrowed his eyes and made his face stern as a mask of Mars. This trick of expression was a great asset, and with it went his altered speech—terse, brief sentences strained through straightened lips, while he looked his man hard in the eye; the whole “get-up” (when in commission) varied never an iota. It was so impressive that that regiment began to sprout a whole school of little Superior Beings. We youngsters who were sometimes tempted to ask a recruit how he was getting along, or to vouchsafe a greeting to old sergeants who had been in the service before we were born, were properly quelled and shamed.

I remember Warren as a recruit, a big, heavy-shouldered farmer boy, round-eyed, frank-faced and rosy, and with no more idea of military discipline than a raw “volunteer.” The first time he ran foul of that iron duty-mask of Carson's, he cried out wonderingly—“Why, you aint mad, are you, Cap? 'Cause shore—”

“Stand up when I speak to you, and don't slouch like a lout! Now Private—eh—Warren, never dare again as long as you live, call me ‘Cap.’”

“Aw, now, don't get mad, Cap—I mean Cap'n. I'll call you General if you say so—don't get—”

But Carson was indeed “mad” now. His idea of meeting this situation was to mangle the self-respect out of his victim. Warren was used to roughness, but not to spite, and under Carson's reproof he seemed to grow by inches.

“Now look-a-here Cap'n,”—and man-

fully, too, he said it, “I'm willin' to go ahead and do my part in this here, but I aint going to stand for no such dog's talk as that. If you say a thing like that again, you got to fight, Cap'n or no Cap'n.”

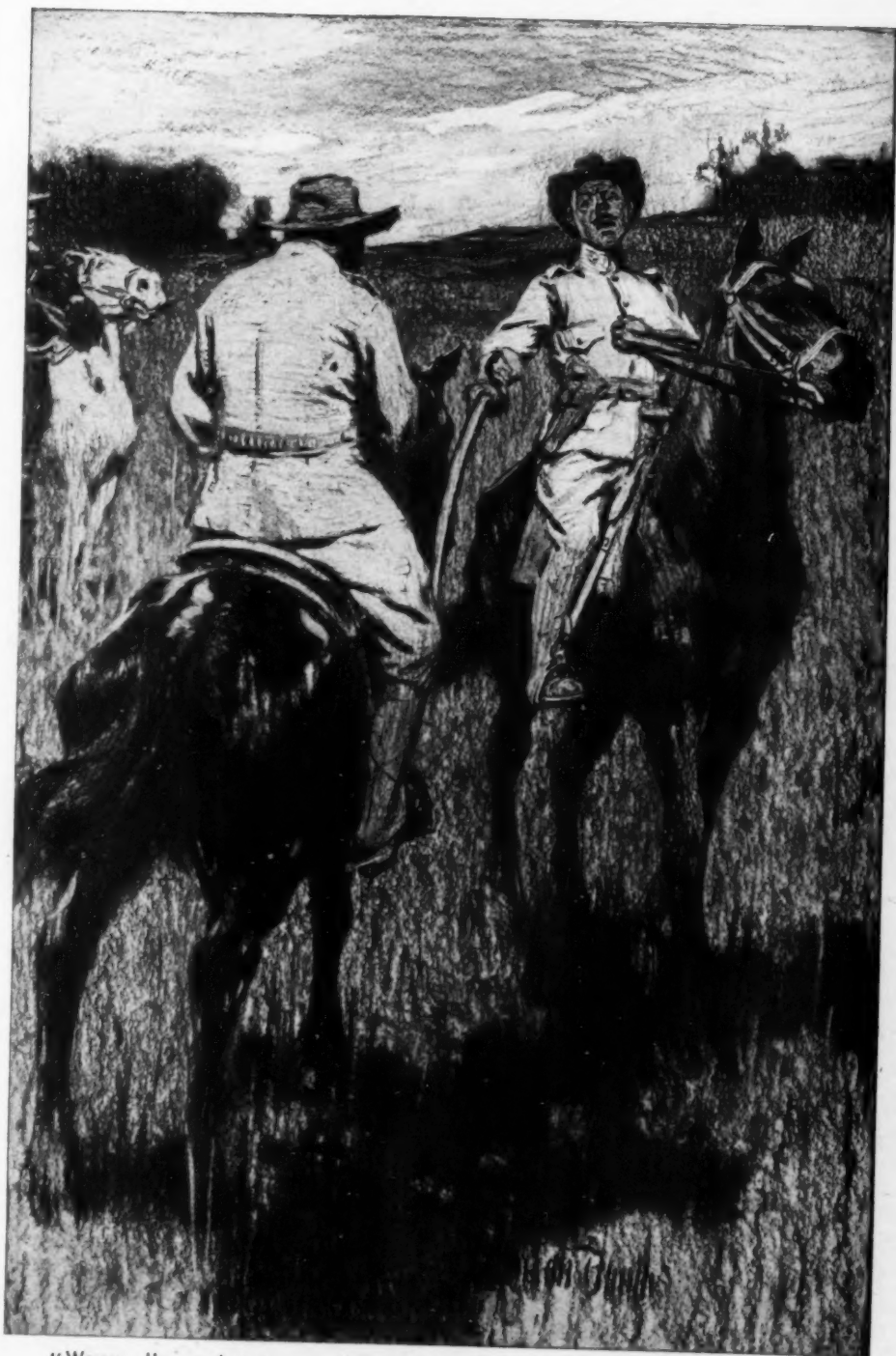
Naturally, Warren went to the guard-house.

By the time we got to Annac, Warren was a different man. The change was not so pleasing as the theory of military discipline would lead one to hope.

We drilled long, earnestly and often at Annac; that was Carson's idea of duty, especially since you couldn't see the troops for the dust—the dry season was coming on. The men would come home so black with grime and sweat you couldn't tell one from another. Then they spent the morning cleaning rifles and saddles and kits, blistering work; but Carson ordered them to carry full kit. There were no “showers” at Annac; and to wash themselves they had to carry water in buckets and throw it over each other. Carson was not responsible for that, but I believe the men thought he was. Siesta-time was a mockery at Annac. It was too hot for anyone to sleep. From my window I could see into the big squad-room, and I used to lie in my hammock, fight flies with a fan and watch the men sitting around on the bamboo floor in their underclothes, particularly Warren. For Warren was getting queer. The skin was white and taut now over his gaunt, big-boned face, and his eyes were blood-shot and shifty. He'd squat native-fashion against the wall, and after a while he would spring to his feet and creak off across the bamboo with his head hanging and loose. There is an old, hide-worn bear in San Francisco that walks the same way; up and down Warren would go, twice, three times, and then squat once more against the wall. Three months of imprisonment and the curious, subtle corruption of the Island atmosphere—that was what his ways bespoke. They were not pleasing.

One day Carson called him from the ranks at drill.

“Warren,” he said, you must imagine *how*, “I've spoken to you often enough about using your spurs on that horse. A great, splay-footed farmer like you ought



"Warren, I've spoken to you often enough about using your spurs on that horse"

to know better than that. *Get* back in ranks. Sergeant—three days in the kitchen, and see that he works.”

We had native scullions to do the troop's work in the kitchen at Annac. The men paid them out of their own pitiful wages, with Carson's permission, so you see that this punishment was unfair. I heard afterward that one of those mud-brown images mocked Warren. At any rate, we found him—the image—stretched out on the floor and when the Sergeant tried to take Warren to the Captain, he backed into a corner behind the stove swinging a butcher's cleaver. It was late in the evening and almost dark in the kitchen; I caught the gleam of his eyes in the gloom and I thought of a cornered panther. I suppose it was “subversive to discipline,” but he came out when I spoke to him and—well, I didn't tell Carson about it and neither did the Sergeant.

I don't know whether Carson ever knew of this happening or not, but from now on he was awake to Warren's existence, and a competent, systematic man-baiting was the result. Night after night he called Warren into the orderly room and entertained himself with the use of his talents. I can see them now in the half-light of the little office, Carson sitting with one knee indolently crossed above the other, his long, white fingers toying with a paper knife and the mask drawn taut, while he sought out Warren's raw places and rasped them; and across from him, dimly defined, the great, hulking mass of Warren's shoulders, as he stood shifting his weight uneasily from foot to foot, his head drooping forward so that a little line of white showed beneath the pupils of his eyes, his lower-lip hanging, ugly and lax. He hardly spoke a word during these interviews and his face remained clayey and without expression, but the whole sight gave me creepy little shivers down my back, and I used to sit and grip my chair arms until it was over. I think Carson realized a sense of danger too. In fact I believe that it was that which impelled him. Just the inborn, human trait of wanting to see “how close you can come without hitting it.” But the instant War-

ren's shadow disappeared Carson wiped away the mask.

“Come on, Thirsty, let's go home.” (I ought to say that Thirsty means Thurston and not—something else). You see he was all good fellow again in an instant.

One night Warren came to me. He had little power of language but I felt all the demon's claws that pinched his heart and scratched his brain as he stood awkwardly before me and talked in broken sentences.

“It aint so much the heat, Lootenant an' it aint the work, or even his talk. I'm used to that sort now. It's that turrible grit to his jaw an' them fishy eyes an' that wooden, snaky-like face—kind of as though I was a monkey or a dawg or less. An' he baits me—all the time *seemin' not to*—like I wasn't even fit for baitin'. Why it's pokin' sharp sticks at a painter in a cage. Tell him, Lootenant. Not that I'm askin' him to stop. Don't you see—he thinks it aint dangerous an' I *know* it is. Not that I'm a-threatenin'. But I'm different, Lootenant. I'm afraid, myself. I aint just sure of myself. Sometimes creepy little, clammy-like things goes shiverin' an' crawlin' up my arms an' back an' comes together in a wriggly little knot right here in my head an' then I sort o' forgits things. I didn't used to be that way, Lootenant, an' I'm scared. He's done it—him an' this damned place. It's turrible, Lootenant—this place. It done it. Oh, I'm scared.”

He came close, like a child snuggling in the dark, and I forgot about my straps and reached out and touched his hand. It was cold, like a wet fish.

“Oh, it's the damned place, Lootenant, just look at it.”

I did “look at it” from the window. A moon as white as a bleached skull looked down on the earth as still as death. It was moonlight such as you do not know—south-sea moonlight that lay across the witch'd land like a spell. It whitened the nipa roofs and blackened the walls, and here and there across the parade the broad, silvery spear of a banana palm shimmered back an almost blinding light—while below it crawled a shadow like a venomous, clawing, spider. And





Warren was lying flat on his stomach, firing deliberately

this was the land, the beauty of the heavens casting the shadows of the damned. An evil stillness possessed it, too—not the calm quiet of moonlit nights at home, but the stifling silence of a sinister tomb. The mountains reared black on the shadowy side while the weird *bosque* was dressed in a mantle of shining silver. As I sat looking at it all, a lizard in the roof chirped, sharp and chilling.

"Flowers without odor and *birds without song*," quoted the trembling, powerful man beside me, with a knowledge that surprised me. "Lootenant, I can't stand it. I'll be doin' somethin' turrible, an' they'll shoot me like they did O'Hara at Dacobiast."

There was little enough that I could say and less that I could do. I could not tell Carson and I could not have Warren sent away. I did take him for my striker, thinking Carson would see less of him and forget him. But Carson didn't forget. Warren had become a habit with him and there was little enough to do at Annac. Almost everyone had invented his own pet diversion; one man owned and trained a vicious ape, one coaxed a thatch-lizard down from the roof and made a pet of it, and Carson baited Warren. The hot, dry season was full upon us and the rasping palms sung like sedges before there was any marked variation of the daily program.

A gorgeous little bird that lived in the *bosque* back of my quarters came each day to the sill to look inquiringly in through the window. So tame it became at last, that it scarcely noticed me.

One day Warren brought my horse and equipments to the house to clean them. I heard the clank of my saddle as he dropped it on the porch, and a little later, I knew that he was pottering about my bed-room, but I was busy with troop papers and forgot his presence until I heard his voice beneath the window and something in its quality brought me to my feet. It was wheedling at first, grotesquely inviting and caressing.

"Come here, pretty little birdie, come, come." I thought he was drunk and went to the window to watch him. The bird—I have said he was a gorgeous little fellow—had a blue-black velvet cowl disclosing flaming vestments of yellow, and iridescent wing feathers. It hopped along the ground just beyond his reach and he followed shufflingly.

"Wait, birdie, pretty birdie; I wouldn't hurt you. It's just old sour-ball Warren, he wouldn't hurt you." Then he laughed and I knew he wasn't drunk.

Why, I can never say, but my first impulse was for my revolver and then I saw it was strapped about his waist, together with a bulging bandolier for the rifle that he held in his hand.

"Pretty bird—ah, you would." There was a note of guttural triumph in his voice; a boyish ruse had proved successful. Knocking the peak from his campaign hat, he had held it discus fashion in his hand and as the bird hopped forward, had twirled it with a spinning motion squarely above the little fellow. There was a flash of vivid color and then the hat settled down, a hot, dark prison. In an instant, Warren's whole manner changed; he was on his knees beside the hat; lifting one side of the brim his hand darted in and returned to light holding its pitiful prisoner.

"Now—sing."

There was everything of insane passion and menace in his voice and in that instant, I remembered that I had seen Warren a hundred times watching the bird's strangely silent flittings.

Now he sat tailor fashion on the ground, elbows on knees, holding the frightened prisoner between his two strong hands, and I watched him, completely fascinated.

"You'll sing now, I believe." The trick of inflection caught my ear with a strange, reminiscent twang and I bent down to see his face—then I knew.

A tightening of the jaws pulsed up little knots of muscles at the angles, the lips thinned; it was Carson's pose caught to perfection, and from this copied mask, Warren was speaking in Carson's tones.

"Oh, pardon me, yes, you will. Sing *now*. Will you sing? I've been watching you closely, my bird, for a hundred days, and you haven't uttered a peep." The manner changed again—"and you done it to bait me. We'll see who'll bait now; sing, you black-headed magpie, sing."

The bird struggled a little in his hands.

"I've tried to make you sing and you wont sing. Birds without music—*will* you sing—now, and once for all?"

The wanton horror of it held me fast. Holding the bird's claws in one hand, he grasped the little head with the thumb and forefinger of the other.

"Will you sing?"

The next moment he was on his feet looking at his crimson-tipped fingers and laughing like a ghoul. I called him:

"Warren!"

He wheeled like an infantry adjutant at review, a shower of rotten nipa fell about my ears and my frank-faced farmer boy was leveling for another shot. I stood still from fear, and the fear saved me. He lowered his piece.

"Naw, Lootenant. I ought to do it 'count of the uniform but I wont—not if you stay where you are." He turned and walked away and I knew where he was going as if he had told me. I knew and Warren knew that Carson would be at the barracks at that hour; and more—I knew what would happen. I stole through the back of the house and galloped my horse, under cover of the nipa shacks, around to the barracks. I found Carson in the orderly room.

"Warren has cut loose with my rifle and a hundred rounds—and it's your fault."



I don't know how I came to say it at last, but it went straight home. I suppose it worded his own thought. He stood staring at me like a puzzled boy—and the next instant a steel jacketed bullet tore a gash in the desk-cover and the after-thud drifted in through the open door. It was a case, if ever there was one, for the military mask, but Carson only stood like an ordinary human looking out across the parade ground while another shot ruined the typewriter.

"Thirsty," he said slowly, "it's a hell of a thing—to shoot one of your own men."

"You might send a squad," I ventured.

"Why no, I can't," he said, as though contradicting a false assumption in conics. "You see, I did it myself."

"Well, if you don't do something more soon, he'll be killing the troop, and if we don't get out of here, he'll be killing us."

When I tried to pull him by the sleeve he pushed me off.

"Go, or I'll put you in arrest."

I watched it from the flank. Warren was lying flat on his stomach, in the open parade, firing deliberately and with as great care as he had ever used at practice. It was only a question of time until he would get a fair shot at Carson and that would be the end for him—I'd have to turn out a squad of men and shoot Warren like a dog.

Carson walked into the squad-room—which the men had long deserted, and took a rifle from the racks. Then he stepped out on the porch, and I saw his light khaki silhouetted against the blackened nipa. So did Warren, and his quick shot tore up the boarding of the floor. Then Carson spoke, in the ordinary tones of the quiet and unflustered officer.

"Oh, Warren!" he called. "Drop your gun and come in here or I'll have to shoot you."

The tone startled even Warren, but he misinterpreted it.

"Oh, you will, will you? You're scared out of that jaw-grittin', aint you? Takes ol' sour-ball Warren to call you down."

I saw him lower the barrel of his rifle and bring his cheek close against the brown stock. He was using the peep-

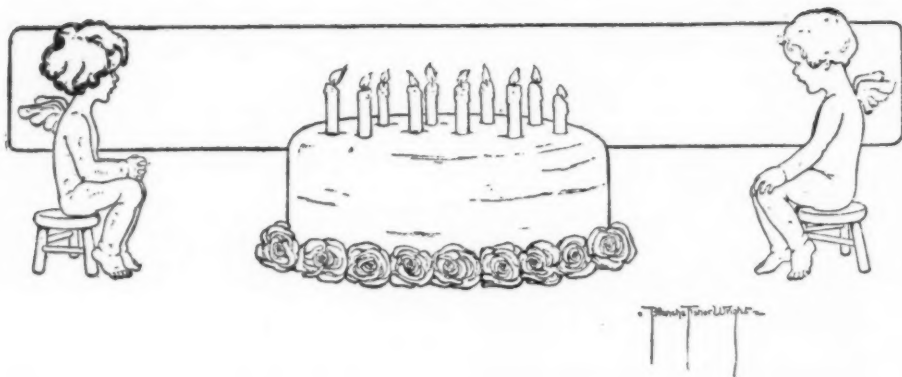
sight and his shooting was dead accurate. I yelled out his name and at the moment that he steadied for the pull, I heard two sharp vicious "*pticks*" instead of one. It was Sergeant Casey shooting from the barrack corner and the bullet tore the dust at Warren's elbow. Warren's shot went wild and Carson was saved for a moment.

Both men turned on Casey.

"If you do that again, Sergeant, I'll kill you." This was Carson speaking. Then:

"If he don't, I will," promised Warren as he pumped another cartridge into the chamber. Carson had decided now and he stood with the rifle resting easily against his shoulder. But the Sergeant calmly fired again, doing a double and a delicate service for his captain, for no one will ever know whose shot sent Warren squirming in the dust. I have a theory, though, for it simply ripped his trigger arm and I had already realized that now at last, plain as day, we were down to the sound-hearted man that was the core of Carson. Another personality had turned up as pat as if the parade ground had been a psychological laboratory. The new ego was boss too, let me tell you, and stayed such. It's my notion that it was while Carson stood squinting over the sights at one of his own men, put there at the muzzle end by his, Carson's, own doings, that the little tin Mars business got knocked out for good.

Carson paid Warren's way home as soon as the surgeons would admit that God's country and his own folks might do more for the boy than their whole bag of tricks. And Warren? Well, it certainly looked as if Fate had sacrificed Warren to save Carson's soul, but after all she didn't exact the price we feared. Warren owns a little farm now somewhere near Muscogee, and is getting on; And if ever he thinks about it all in these terms (and I'm not sure he does not, in his dumb way) he should get what satisfaction he can out of reflecting that not only Carson is reformed into a human being, but that all the little satellite Superior Beings of the Nth Regiment of Horse, have undergone the same happy transformation.



## Janey Discovers the Great Illusion

BY INEZ HAYNES GILLMORE

ILLUSTRATED BY BLANCHE FISHER WRIGHT

JANEY examined herself in the mirror. It was the dulled and fly-specked glass indigenous to the country store. There peered back at her a little, triangular wedge of face that began in a pearly brow, continued under a heavy fall of freckles and ended in a point of pearly chin.

Avidly Janey searched the combination of friendly blue eyes, ridiculous dab of nose and wistful pink mouth for a trace of incipient young-ladyhood.

Mrs. Blair, turning suddenly from the counter, caught the picture—reflected for the hundredth time that Janey had never lost her baby face.

"Mother," Janey said as they stepped from the gloom of the store into the shaded brightness of the main street, "I shall be perfectly happy when I'm ten years old."

"Well, I shall be perfectly happy when you're grown up," said her mother. "This ordering a pattern to fit a child of nine who will soon be ten and is no bigger than six and yet has just started to grow, is something that requires genius. I shall be glad when you reach standard size and stay there."

"Just think—my birthday'll be here in

two weeks! Oh it doesn't seem as if I could wait," Janey said. "When I'm ten—"

"Good morning, girl!" her mother interrupted. Janey started. Then her face turned blank: she could never accustom herself to her mother's calling *ladies'* girls. Mrs. Morgan and Mrs. Kingdon, crossing from the other side of the street, had joined them from behind. There was a flurry of greetings and laughter. Janey withdrew into herself. She knew that all chances of a free expression of her opinion were gone. Any contribution that she would make to the conversation of the three mothers would be greeted by Mrs. Blair with a "Yes, dear—but don't ask any more questions, dear—mother doesn't want to talk with you now."

The talk submerged her for an instant, then flowed over and past. She contented herself with a consideration of the raptures and triumphs and glories of being ten.

Why when you became ten, you entered a new world as definitely as if one's ninth birthday were a little doorway in that endless Wall of Time which stretched from the clear, familiar, lovely Land of Now to the vague, strange, ter-

rifying Land of Forever. Opening it, you passed into—

In the first place you would feel a whole extra year older than the awed and humble little Caroline—who, nevertheless, would glide with equal pace from five to six: you would feel a whole extra year nearer a proud and lofty Elsa Morgan—who, notwithstanding, would leap with equal agility from twelve to thirteen. Janey recalled vaguely that she had experienced the same sensations in going from eight to nine. But she had been mistaken—nine had turned out to be a dead level of existence, much like eight. Whereas *ten*—You would go into a higher class in school. There would be ten candles on your birthday cake. There would be ten little guests at your birthday party. Moreover, Janey felt certain that her tenth birthday, like a ticket, magically endowed, would carry her straight into the heart of that grown-up "crowd" which twelve-year-old Elsa Morgan and thirteen-year-old Colette Kingdon ruled as twin queens. Ah yes, there was something fairly intoxicating about tenness. Janey drew the long breath of him who casts aside forever cramping and deforming fetters.

And then over this rosy-hued mood suddenly slithered the inevitable serpent.

"—perfectly *boy-crazy!*" Mrs. Morgan was saying. "It seems as if I would fly out of my skin. Ordinarily, it's Edward Hollis all day long. But if any new boy comes to town, she talks about nothing but him."

"I'm sure Elsa isn't a circumstance to Colette," Mrs. Kingdon took it up. "Colette is so silly, trying to conceal from me that she's exchanged rings with Stubby West and is wearing his sweater. At first, I thought I'd put my foot down hard and stop it all. Then Wentworth recalled

to me that when we were children we went through pretty nearly the same experience—you know Wentworth and I were brought up in the same town. My mother discovered that I used to take walks with Wentworth and she very foolishly made an awful fuss about it to father. I was so ashamed, I remember; I cried and cried for days and days. Well, when Wentworth recalled that to me, I just made up my mind that I wouldn't repeat mother's mistake. And, as Wentworth says, what difference does it make anyway? They're all nice boys and I'm sure they play very gently with the girls."

"But Mrs. Kingdon," Mrs. Morgan asked, "have you realized what heart-burnings there have been at the various parties? It seems that the Virginia Reel is the climax of the evening's entertainment and, as Edward Hollis is the best



—*Wentworth*—

"I shall be perfectly happy when I'm ten years old"

dancer in Scarsett, all the girls are simply crazy to dance with him. I didn't realize it until I saw how Elsa manœvered to have him for a partner at her fairy party."

"Yes, and Colette fixed it so that he danced with her at her Mother Goose party. I really never did see anything so shameless." Mrs. Kingdon laughed indulgently. "Oh, I'm so glad that the parties are over!"

"Oh, it just makes me feel envious to hear you talk like this," Mrs. Blair exclaimed. "I shall love it when Janey's a big girl and can have real dancing-parties." Janey could hear in her mother's voice a note of the same rapture with which she, herself, anticipated the golden age of ten. "Elsa looked so lovely as the white-and-silver fairy and Colette was such a wonderful Queen of Hearts—I just envied you two, fussing over their pretty clothes. Oh, if Janey would only grow up!"

So! After she and Caroline had cried themselves to sleep because they were not invited to participate in these functions, their mothers had treacherously deserted their offspring to go, themselves, to the parties. For an instant—betrayed by her nearest and dearest—Janey seemed to hang in the most icy and isolated of voids.

"Edward Hollis is a nice dancer." Mrs. Blair continued, "I don't wonder the girls want him for a partner. Then he's so strong—that appeals to them. Which reminds me, I'm going to have a young athlete on my hands for the next two weeks—Bobby Mackintosh. Do you remember Mrs. Mackintosh, Lou? She sat at our table that time you came to luncheon with me last winter—a pretty woman with red hair and the complexion that goes with it."

"Oh perfectly!" said Mrs. Morgan. "I thought her charming."

"Heaven only knows what I'm going to do with him—he's so active. He's as strong as a young giant—exercises all the time. He's a beautiful dancer too, though his mother positively has to drive him to dancing-school. He actually won a prize for fancy dancing at the close of the season last year."

And then the talk, turning to peach-plum jelly, left Janey to meditation. Bobby Mackintosh, the most abhorred of boys, was coming to their house for two weeks. Elsa Morgan's crowd loved new boys. Elsa Morgan's crowd liked strong boys. Elsa Morgan's crowd liked dancing better than anything else in the world. Elsa Morgan's crowd fought for partners in the Virginia Reel. Bobby was new, strong and a dancer. These thoughts boiled, sizzled, fermented and finally exploded in Janey Blair's little head.

The explosion did not occur until noon however; and then, it was so carefully veiled in Janey's airiest aspect of composure, her politest tone of entreaty, that even Uncle Jim, wizard though he was, did not recognize it as an explosion.

"Mother, when are you going to get me the paper to send out invitations for my birthday party?"

Mrs. Blair sighed. Uncle Jim groaned. But Janey only set her pink lips the firmer. It was always thus when she labored with the hide-bound conservatism of adults. "You promised when I was sick," she reminded them collectively.

"Go on, Miriam, pay up," said Uncle Jim, deserting his sister for the enemy. "Be a sport! And may it be a lesson to you!"

Janey had observed that men were much more susceptible to conversion than women.

"Well, a little one maybe," Mrs. Blair said feebly. "Just ten little girls, one for each year."

"Mother," Janey interposed again, "you know Bobby Mackintosh will be here and he's a great big boy—he wont want to play with little girls."

"Oh my pities!" Mrs. Blair exclaimed in the depths of self-commiseration. "You're right, Janey. Heavens, Jim, I haven't words to describe how I dread two weeks with that Bobby Mackintosh. Mrs. Mackintosh is the nicest woman I know. But Bobby—oh he's so trying; one of those boys with an inquiring mind. Isn't it wonderful how children forget!" she added in an aside. "He used to tickle Janey and trip her up and pull her hair and make fun of her clothes and it's all gone out of her head. Well," she con-



cluded, "I always have to go to bed for a day after Janey's parties and this one will probably land me in a rest cure. But if I promised, I suppose I must. We'll have to have dancing."

"Oh yes, mother, we must have a Virginia Reel," Janey said guilelessly.

"Oh, of course. Now Janey, I'm not going to have any quarreling about partners. I shall pick two of as many kinds of flowers as there are couples. I'll give out one set to the girls and one to the boys and those whose flowers match will have to dance together. Do you understand?"

"Yes," said Janey. "Caroline, let's go down to the beach!"

Caroline seizing her pail and shovel, pattered over to Janey's side. "Do you like Bobby Mackintosh?" she asked of her preoccupied chief, when they were well out of ear-shot.

"I hate him," Janey said with the simple brevity which characterized all her expressions of opinion. "More than I hate other boys," she added after a pause.

"It's too bad heeth coming down here," said Caroline.

"I'm glad he's coming down," said Janey. "And you'll see why, Caroline Benton, before I get through."

The ocean stretched like a pulsating carpet of gray satin from the dish-shaped curve of the beach to the roll of gauze that veiled the horizon. To the satin of the middle distance, a group of moss-boats, the mossers calling and laughing as they pulled at the weedy rocks, gave the sound of activity. To the gauze far off, a file of sail-boats, beating their silver

wings for balance on the horizon-line, gave a note of motion. To the long, hummocky, dun-colored stretch of sand, a group of boys and girls in bathing-suits gave a splendid splash of color.

The girls sat in a line with their backs against a boat. Head and front of them was Elsa Morgan—a frail, blonde elf,

her glittering hair loose and streaming like a golden cataract over her pale-blue princess bathing-suit. Next in importance came Colette Kingdon—an incipient goddess in crimson, gray-eyed and chestnut-haired, a subtle foreshadowing in face and figure of the massively handsome woman into which she was predestined to grow. Lower in the scale reclined two handmaids: Cordy West—a little, thin brunette, carved of ivory by nature and colored amber by the sun, included in the "crowd" because boys appealed to her only as creatures whom she must try to outrun or outswim—and Pink Hollis, like a full-blown peony, sweet, amiable, rosy-cheeked, who bore the proud distinction of being sister to the season's hero, Edward Hollis. But if Cordy and Pink served but as ladies-in-waiting, the other three girls—sly, spiteful, hook-nosed Hannah Merrill, stupid, dumpy, spectacled Betsy Clark,

shy, silent, hazel-eyed Lucy Locke—merged with one another into a mere unconsidered background for Elsa and Colette.

Opposite this array of femininity, the boys, more or less buried in the sand, presented to the eye only their shaved, bullet heads and a heterogeneous collection



Wearing Stubby West's sweater

of arms and legs, the color of rust and bulging with muscle. There was Edward Hollis, clean-skinned and athletic-looking. There were Stubby Keith and Jakey West, the replica of each other except for an inch or two of height, all tanned to a ferocious black and still peeling. There were Tom and Wentie Kingdon, of a Swede-like blondness, so shaved as to head that their ears almost flapped in the breeze and so freckled as to be virtually featureless. There was last and least of all, Kim Morgan, mediocre brother of Elsa.

Janey saw none of these details. She only knew that here was the holy of holies of junior society in Scarsett, that here was the Mecca of her social pilgrimage.

Elsa Morgan, glancing up, caught sight of the children. Her face changed subtly. But before she could submit Janey to the freezing-out process that always sent her home raging, Janey spoke.

"Mother says," she announced in her clear, decided treble, "that I can have a party on my birthday. That's week after next—Thursday. And I want you to come."

Had Janey thrown a lighted hay-mow into their midst, the effect could not have been more sudden. You could almost hear the ice crack. You could almost see the ice melt.

"Going to have ice cream, Janey?" asked Stubby West, who was the cut-up for the crowd. "I don't go to parties where they don't have ice cream."

"Of course we're going to have ice cream," said Janey indignantly. "How could it be a party without ice cream?" However deficient Janey was in sense of humor, she was as strong as most children in sense of diplomacy. "You see," she went on, "besides being my birthday, Bobby Mackintosh is coming down for two weeks and my mother says we ought to do something to make him have a good time."

The stir of interest that this statement elicited was not confined entirely to the boys.

"How old is this Bobby Mackintosh?" Elsa asked in a tone that she labored to make languid.

"Fifteen," Janey answered.

"What kind of a boy is he?" Elsa went on.

"Heeth a horrid boy," little Caroline put in indignantly. "Janey hatesth him and tho do I. He pullth her hair and makth fun of her rompers and tripth her up—"

"He does tease me," Janey said with exactly as much sweetness as if Caroline, by this untimely abuse, had not put a spoke in the wheel of her diplomacy. "But that's only because he doesn't like little girls." She paused an instant, then played her trump card. "You see he likes girls old enough to dance. He won a prize for being the best dancer in his dancing-school last winter."

"Oh!" said Elsa and "Oh!" said Colette and "Oh!" said all the satellites.

"Are you going to have dancing at your party?" Colette asked.

"Oh, of course," said Janey brightly. "Nothing but dancing."

"Are you going to have a Virginia Reel?" Elsa continued, not attempting now to conceal her eagerness.

"Oh, of course," Janey replied again.

"What school does this Bobby Mackintosh go to?" Edward Hollis asked in a deep, masculine voice.

"He's going away to school next year—I don't know what kind of a school it is. His mother calls it a prep school. He's awful strong. He has dumb-bells in his room and those things that look like nine-pins and he plays base-ball and foot-ball."

Edward Hollis said nothing, but doubling up his fist and swinging his mighty forearm, he contemplated a swelling biceps with satisfaction.

"Is it going to be a costume party?" Colette asked.

Janey thought rapidly. Elsa had given a fairy party, Colette a Mother Goose party. Her imagination, swimming in possibilities, perceived an idea, dived for it, emerged with it in its teeth, so to speak. "I think it will be a flower-party," she said sweetly. And drawing Caroline to her side, she took her place among the "crowd" as one who has presented credentials and been approved.

That afternoon, Elsa Morgan strolled



over to the War-riner place for the first time in weeks. She presented Janey with a string of beads.

"Who's going to dance with you in the Virginia Reel—at your party, Janey?" she asked carelessly.

"I don't know," said Janey truthfully.

"Well, I thought I'd stop in and tell you that I'll dance it with Bobby Mackintosh instead of Edward Hollis," Elsa announced in her usual tone of command. "I want to help you all I can," she added with a politeness that Janey had not for a long time met at her hands.

"Oh thank you, Elsa," Janey said.

The next morning Colette Kingdon dropped in on her way to the Post-office. She was carrying a doll's high chair. "Janey," she said winningly, "I found this among my things to-day and I remembered that you always liked it when we used to play dolls together. I don't play dolls any more myself, so I thought I'd bring it down and give it to you."

"Oh Colette," Janey said, with a real delight in her voice. "What a darling you are!"

"Oh—that boy who's coming to see you hasn't got here yet, has he?" Colette asked in an incidental sort of way.

"No," Janey answered. "Mother got a letter from Mrs. Mackintosh to-day and she said she'd be down to-morrow."

"I was thinking," Colette went on, "that, perhaps, you'd like somebody to pay special attention to him, as he is a stranger here. And I was going to say that I'd promise to dance the Virginia Reel with him if you wanted me to."



"Who's going to dance with you?" she asked

"Oh thank you, Colette," Janey said.

That afternoon on her way to the beach, Betsy Clark dropped in.

"Oh, Janey," she said, "last night I came across a whole lot of paper-dolls that I used to play with and I thought you and Caroline might like them, so I brought them over to-day. Of course I won't come in if that new boy, Bobby Mackintosh, is here. Except, perhaps, you'd like somebody to get acquainted with him. It would be dreadful if the night of your party, he didn't have anybody to dance the Virginia Reel with. I'll promise to be his partner, rather than have him feel hurt."

"Oh, thank you, Betsy," Janey said.

On her way to the village, Cordy West caught up with her. "Say, Janey," she said in her boyish, straight-to-the-point way. "I wish you'd fix it so I could dance the Virginia Reel at your party with that new boy, Bobby Mackintosh. Not that I care anything about dancing with him. But I'd like to cut out Elsa and Colette for once. You know both those girls try to get every new boy that

comes to this town and one of them always does. Besides, I feel as if he'd feel kinder lonesome and queer with no partner. And I wouldn't mind dancing with him—even if he was a bad dancer."

"Oh thank you, Cordy," Janey said.

In Mallon's, Hannah Merrill stopped her with—"Oh Janey! I've been trying to think to tell you something every time I saw you. I know how hard it is to make girls dance with strange boys at a party. And so if you want to tell that new boy, Bobby Mackintosh, that he's to dance the Virginia Reel with me, why of course I'm perfectly willing to be his partner."

"Oh thank you, Hannah," Janey said.

In fact, Janey's reply had become so stereotyped that when Lucy Locke came panting up to her side with a—"Janey, dear, I just stopped to ask you—" Janey's lips were all made up for her opening—"Oh thank you," the instant Lucy opened her mouth.

But Lucy had a surprise for her.

"—if at your party, you'd be sure not to make me dance the Virginia Reel with that new boy who's coming—Bobby—I forget his last name—"

"Mackintosh," Janey replied.

"Oh yes—Mackintosh. For Janey—oh I'd be awfully ashamed if Elsa or Colette knew this—but I'm terribly bashful with new boys. I'll tell you a secret, Janey, if you'll cross your throat never to tell anybody: I'm terribly bashful with all boys. I always feel frightened when they ask me to dance. Are you afraid of them, Janey?"

"No," Janey said, "I'm not afraid of them. But I hate them just as much as if I was."

"Well, I'd really much rather not dance at all. And Janey, mother asked me to ask you if I might bring my little cousin, Carl Norris? He's coming over to stay with us for a few days and that's his last night. I wouldn't like to leave him at home."

"Why of course," Janey said cordially.

"He's only ten. And he's bashful too. And I thought if you didn't mind, Janey, I'd dance every dance with him—Virginia Reel and all."

"All right, Lucy," said Janey.

"Oh, mother!" Janey said at lunch-

eon, "only eleven days more! I'll be perfectly happy when I'm ten."

"And I'll be perfectly happy," said her mother, "when you're grown up."

Bobby Mackintosh arrived that afternoon. Janey observed with disapproval that he had not changed. His thatch of red hair, full of unmanageable cowlicks, still stuck up in all directions. His big blue eyes still protruded from his head in a hateful, staring, pop-eyed way. His prevailing expression of a sense of superiority to all little girls of nine had not softened an atom. In many other ways his development had not proceeded. Before he had been in the house five minutes, Henry James, the Maltese cat, had retreated wrathfully to the top shelf of the book-case, and George Meredith, the English bull-dog, had degenerated to a yowling, snapping, welter of indignation. Ten minutes more and he had broken Janey's music-box, smashed Caroline's swimming-doll and put Uncle Jim's typewriter out of commission. Two minutes later, proclaiming hunger, he had made way with one glass of milk, two slices of bread and butter, a huge square of ginger-bread and an apple.

The strange part of it was that Uncle Jim, on whose sapience in judging people, Janey could, hitherto, always depend—Uncle Jim seemed to regard him as a human being. For one thing, when Bobby discovered that Mr. Warriner was the author of a favorite foot-ball story, he asked him at least a hundred questions. In fact, the two males had a very interesting talk. Afterwards, Janey heard Uncle Jim tell Mrs. Mackintosh that Bobby had patronized him less than any young person he had met in the last five years.

As soon as possible, Janey took Bobby to the beach—a delighted Caroline tagging these grown-up happenings—and turned him loose on Elsa Morgan's crowd.

After all, Bobby had the virtues of his faults and he fulfilled every prophecy that Janey had made of him. In the dash for the raft, which of course Janey and Caroline could watch only from the shore, he distanced all competitors with a mighty stroke that tore the water into fountains on either side. Once on the raft,

he gave an exhibition of fancy diving that brought the girls about him, clamoring for instruction. Coming back, he swam so long under water that even the boys began to look serious. In the warming-up game of ball in which, subsequently, all the males engaged, he caught flies that were the admiration of the girls and made hits that were the envy of the boys.

Trailing Bobby's arrival, Janey Blair swung immediately to the loftiest pinnacle of social success. Elsa offered to teach her how to play tennis. Colette invited her to her house for croquet. Cordy West included her among her guests on a hay-ride. But, better even than this, the girls were always running over at odd times to help her with her doll's clothes. Her family bloomed with an entire fall outfit.

Indeed the War-riner house became temporary rendez-vous for the "crowd."

"Just think," Janey said for the hundredth time during the week, "I'm almost perfectly happy. I shall be perfectly happy when I'm ten."

"And I shall be perfectly happy," her mother reiterated with an emphasis that the last week seemed to have increased, "when you're grown-up."

There was only

one fly in the ointment. Even all this excitement could not seem to hurry the passage of time. "Mother, I feel as if my birthday would *never* come," Janey said again and again.

The last day of her ninth year was the worst of all. "It does seem as if tomorrow would never get here," Janey said fretfully. "I didn't sleep a wink all last night, waiting for to-day."

Mrs. Blair and Mrs. Mackintosh received this dreadful intelligence with sur-



Elsa Morgan, glancing up, caught sight of the children



"May I have the pleasure of the first dance"

prising serenity. They even smiled. Mentally, Janey condemned them for their heartlessness. How was she to know that her mother, entering the nursery at a precise quarter after eight, had found her little daughter securely locked in the arms of Morpheus.

But to-morrow did come, passing through the inevitable translation to to-day, during the process—and Elizabeth Jane Blair entered into the blissful state of ten-ness. Not quite blissful however—in spite of such delightful incidents as birthday presents plus ten pats and ten kisses from everybody. For if the last day of nine seemed long, what can be said of the first day of ten? With a birthday-party at its end, it simply prolonged itself through the ages and æons.

But at last an irresponsible sun, having wallowed for hours about the horizon-

line, discovered no further excuse for staying above and gradually rolled below. At last, the treacherous stars—late to their appointment, every mother's son of them—began to pin-point their way through the sky. At last, an utterly criminal moon—due hours earlier—lifted a timid head out of the sea and peered about in a shamefaced way, as if, at the first sign of a rebuke, it would slink back into the water. At last, all the vases were filled with flowers and all the fire-places with greens. At last, the dinner-dishes cleared away and the table set with the beautiful Warriner heirlooms, Mrs. Blair, Mrs. Mackintosh and Mr. Warriner went about, lighting lamps, candles and lanterns and whittling paraffin on the bared library floor. At last the music-people came and took their places in the pretty, vine-hung corner. At last, the



mothers inserted a flushed and sparkling little Janey into her costume of a white and gold daisy, and a flushed and sparkling little Caroline into her costume of a brown and gold daisy.

Then after one more æon of waiting, there came a step on the piazza—another—a few more—many—the babble of voices—the entrance into the room of what might be a file of girls with the bodies of flowers or a garland of flowers with the faces of girls—and the party had begun.

Begun I said. But for Janey Blair, it really began twice. The first time was when everybody arrived, and she settled herself down with a sigh of relief to watch, knowing full well that none of those big boys would ask her to dance. The second time was when the music struck up and little Carl Norris, the extra guest, suddenly arose, walked the length of the room, paused before her, presented her with a marvelous bow that bi-sectioned him exactly in the middle, adding in the trained accents of the dancing-schools:

"May I have the pleasure of the first dance?"

Exactly her height, exactly her size, little Carl had a delicate, pale, dark face over which his heavy brown curls were constantly trying to fall. He wore a little duck sailor-suit, the trousers of which came to the very ground and flared starchily there. He wore a wonderful tie of knotted cord, the ends of which disappeared into his blouse-pocket. He wore on one sleeve a mysterious device embroidered in colors.

To Janey it seemed as if the glass of fashion and the mould of form had stooped to her.

She rose trembling. Trembling, Carl put his arm about her. The two children teetered and see-sawed until they fancied they had caught the swing of the music, then, like two frail crafts that, having waited for fair weather, embark trustingly on a glassy sea, they whirled off. One instant, Janey thought with horror of Lucy and her promise to her; the next she caught sight of her spinning past with Bobby.

Finding Lucy a dancer perfectly adapted to his methods, Bobby Mackintosh economized time, trouble and energy by dancing every dance with her. In vain, Elsa Morgan, a vision of cool, blonde loveliness in her water-lily cos-



The expression on Janey's face was new

tume, waved white petals of coquetry in his very face. In vain, Colette—the most full-blown of pink roses—held out a thornless hand to him. In vain, Cordy, a bachelor-button, Betsy, a poppy, and Hannah, a morning-glory, assailed him with all kinds of hints, suggestions, invitations, opportunities. When the flowers were distributed for the Virginia Reel, he calmly seized two dahlias, presented one to his partner and then triumphantly led her forth.

Stubby West, maddened to fury by Colette's indifference, left the party prematurely. For three dances, Colette experienced the novel sensation of playing wall-flower. Bridling at first, her chagrin finally conquered. Hysterics ensued. Mrs. Blair and Mrs. Mackintosh haled her upstairs and spent an hour calming her.

Perhaps strangest of all was the metamorphosis of Lucy Locke. Never before had Lucy reigned belle. Never before had she been even courted. The color of excitement began to sift into her pale cheeks. The light of coquetry began to star her hazel eyes. Her little violet cap cocked itself rakishly over one ear. She danced like a fairy. Incessantly she talked. Incessantly she rang the chime of her silvery little laugh. The boys, following their leader, began to crowd about her. It was literally her *début*.

None of these events, however, excited such comment as the instantaneous romance of Janey Blair and Carl Norris.

They danced every dance together. In the pauses of the music, they sat side by side, rapturously exchanging ten-year-old points of view.

After the first waltz, Carl said—"Janey, will you dance every dance with me?"

And Janey said, "Yes."

After the first two-step, Carl said—"Janey: when we eat our ice cream, will you sit with me?"

And Janey said, "Yes."

In the intermission, Carl said—"Janey, will you be my girl? I never had a girl before."

And Janey said, "Yes."

After the Virginia Reel, Carl said—"Janey, I'm going home to-morrow but I'll come back again next year to Scar-

sett so's to be at your party when you're eleven. Will you dance every dance with me then?"

And Janey said, "Yes."

After he had said his last good-night, he suddenly darted again to Janey's side. "Janey," he whispered, "I think you're an awful pretty little girl. And when you're eleven, you'll be even prettier."

*Pretty!*

She had always yearned to be pretty. But nobody had ever called her pretty before. Once she had asked her mother if she thought her pretty. Mrs. Blair had answered—"If you behave as well as you look, you'll do very well." And once, not extracting much encouragement from that cryptic remark, she had inquired of the same authority if she thought she would be pretty when she grew up. Mrs. Blair had replied—"I don't know, I'm sure. Pretty is as pretty does."

Pretty! Eleven! *Eleven!* ELEVEN!

Missing her daughter after the last guest had departed, Mrs. Blair went upstairs in search of her. Janey was not in the nursery. Mrs. Blair passed on to her own room. There in the corner, a small white-and-gold figure stood before the long pier-glass. But Janey was not looking at that reflection. She was peering at the smaller, closer one which peered back at her from a hand-mirror. Gazing into the taller glass, Mrs. Blair caught the whole picture.

The expression on Janey's face was new—a little happy smile, half the wonder of revelation, half self-satisfaction, ran riot there. Staring at her, Mrs. Blair caught the first budding in her daughter's look of another Janey—the Janey of eighteen years. Slim, virginal, delicate, dewy, the freckles vanished forever from the white skin, the incorrigible hair roped into a coronal softly burnished, softly brown, the red lips smiled with the unthinking joy of youth, the blue eyes shone with star-dreams.

Something warned Janey that she was not alone. She looked up. "Mother," she said radiantly, "I shall be perfectly happy when I'm *eleven*."

"Janey Blair," her mother said, a desperate catch of the breath roughing her voice, "don't you *dare* grow up!"



# The Aroma of Circumstance

BY BYRON WILLIAMS

WHEN one has been raised a poet and by the force of calamitous circumstances dropped from the pinnacle of Olympus into the environs of a livery-stable, one scarcely can blame one's intended mother-in-law if she complains.

Reginald DeForrest Worthington had read his Longfellow and was conversant with the fact that adversities have a nauseous habit of flying in flocks. He even realized, in a vague sort of way, that the opulent prince of to-day very frequently is the bedraggled beggar of to-morrow. But knowing all this in the abstract was different from actually experiencing it.

When Worthington, Sr., died suddenly at the end of a strenuous campaign in wheat and a 32-caliber revolver, Reginald took the bump with no more outward evidence of his misfortune than crêpe and a dolorous swing to the poetic meter in which he wrote his rhythms. When the lawyers had finished disentangling the conglomerate backlash on the reel of the family fortunes and had concluded the one-act drama of dividing the spoils like the butternut boys who sit on the grass with the bag between them and say, "I'll take this one!" and "I'll take that one!" until nothing remains, Reginald experienced the second bump gamely and continued to write for the magazines.

But when the poems returned as fast as he could write them and with printed forms of refusal at that, Reginald DeForrest Worthington began to study the unstable disposition of his landlady whose growing coldness presaged an early flocking with the other vultures "from the invisible ether" and a terminal bump that would jar him loose from his hall bed-room and drop him mendicantly on a bench in the city park, the prey of chill winds and rude policemen who didn't know a quatrain from a mess of asparagus.

When the morning mail came in with a note from the editor of Startwood's magazine saying he liked the poem, "Aurora's Matutinal Car," and would trade him a year's subscription to the magazine for it, Reginald, being a poet and not a bookworm, wired Uncle Henry.

"What you need," panted Uncle Henry when he had climbed up the five flights of stairs and landed, winded but voluble, on the other chair in the hall bed-room, "is to go to work. Know anything?"

Reginald appeared dazed.

"I say, do you know anything? What'd you fit yerself for at college? Your father spent enough money on your education. What per-cent does it pay?"

Reginald drew his trouser-cuffs an inch higher above the silk bows of his patent leathers, made a meeting house of his soft, taper-like fingers and answered as became a man versed in higher aspiration.

"I am a poet, sir! A disciple of Homer, of Sophocles and of Euripides!"

Uncle Henry snorted.

"I feared as much. When a woman like your mother gits off th' farm, quits huntin' under th' barn for hens'-eggs an' cookin' fer threshers, jams her bare feet into high-heeled French shoes that pinch, bangs her hair, tackles one of them umpire gowns an' marries th' son of a hod-carrier who has learned how to tote home gold instead of gold-bricks, their effete offspring ginerally turns out t' be a poet—or a burglar. They aint no wife, is they? You aint—"

"Er—no sir, that is, not yet."

"Humph! I should hope not. Any girl that would marry you would be a fool. A poet and a fool ought to be barred by statute from lumberin' up the highway of a world that is advertisin' fer harvest hands an' gittin' half-baked doctors an' lawyers. Put on your hat an' come with

me. I don't know why I'm a-doin' this exceptin' on account of your mother who, before she come to the city, married your pa an' got her head full of notions, was as capable a woman as ever spanked a pound of butter into subjection fer man or beast!"

For a moment Reginald regretted Uncle Henry and especially Uncle Henry's early admiration of his mother, but he thought of the overdue board-bill, the supercilious air of the landlady, and capitulated. The paths of literature were indeed thorny.

On the suburban train, after countless inner bracings, Reginald broke the grim silence, interrogatively:

"Are you going to buy the *Hope Telegram* for me, Uncle Henry? I must confess it will be a come-down, but I—"

Uncle Henry almost swallowed the butt of his stogie in the explosion that followed:

"Buy the *Hope Telegram* fer you? Buy th'—well, of all the conceited young jackanapes I ever heard tell of. No, sir! No, SIR! I aint a-goin' t' buy th' *Hope Telegram* for you or anybody else. I'm a-goin' t' buy th' Hope livery stable—that is, if I kin git it right! I'm a-goin' to set you up in a business that pays real money! It's run down a bit, but I guess with my help and a strong hired-man you kin—"

Reginald started, grew suddenly white and furtively glanced toward the car window. Unhappily, it was closed. Before he could open it to dash himself to oblivion along the right of way, Uncle Henry would have him by the ankles. Even in his agony the young man took mental note of Uncle Henry's hands. They were large hands, strong and horny. There would be no use in trying to slip past such determined digits. He must bide his time.

"What's th' matter? Are you skeered you can't run it?"

Reginald sighed, shaking his head sadly.

"Brace up, young feller. Git some cement into your backbone. Adversity never hurt nobody. Trouble teaches us th' truth an' makes us strong an' able t' fight. Everything turns out for th'

best. If your father'd fought back instead of endin' it with a gun, you'd still be a worthless poet, singin' your way across th' stubble fields that husbandry has tilled, a triffin', good-for-nothin' atom in a sea of industry. Now you're a-goin' t' be a business man—an', for th' sake of your mother, I'm a-goin' t' help you. Kin you hitch up a hoss?"

"I—I'm afraid not, Uncle. Is it a horse livery?"

"Is it a ho—well, by guinea, you do take th' cake! Is it a— No, it aint no hoss livery! It's one of them eerieplane stands run with hot air and an undertakin' branch. It's got eerieplanes upholstered in rattan, an' eerieplanes in gold plush. Some is finished in quarter-sawed oak an' some in white enamel with bath extry. They aint a ringboned, windgalled or spavined one in th' lot. Th' only disagreeable feature t' th' hull business is a-gittin' th' blamed eerieplanes t' head into their stalls of a night after th' oats is distributed. These here hot-air hosses don't seem t' take t' oats! Is it a hoss—!"

Uncle Henry, too exasperated for further speech, hunched himself into a disgusted ball on the edge of the car seat and puffed wildly at his fireless cigar. This city-bred nephew of his was likely to become irritating.

"Is—is there a horse in the barn named Pegasus?" faltered Reginald after ten minutes of glum silence.

"No, we run more t' 'Kit' and 'Doll' up in our neck of th' woods. Who was she? What fair did she win at?"

"It—he wasn't a—Pegasus was a Greek horse that—"

"No, we aint got no furrin' horses in Hope. They's a Greek cuss runnin' a fruit stand there but he aint much shucks as far as I kin see. Maybe in hosses they run better. Be they any relation t' th' Normans?"

"The Norman kings were a people and not ho—"

"Who said anything about kings? I'm talkin' about Norman hosses. I asked you—"

"You don't understand, Uncle Henry. Pegasus was a wingéd horse, a Greek—"

"Say, young feller, don't you git gay

with me. You may be mighty smart in the city, but you're almost in Hope now. You aint a poet no longer. You're agoin' into business—for th' sake of your mother I'm a doin' it, but don't rile me."

Reginald waved his hand deprecatorily. "Pegasus was a Greek god, a myth, a winged horse watered at the springs by the nymphs and—"

"We water ours at a waterin' trough in th' barn. Johnny Brown does it, th' freckle-faced, hair-lipped kid of Widow Brown. His pa was killed by a pile-driver. He got too close to th' mules' heels an' th' pile-driver exploded. Th' flowers at that funeral was costly, one design bein' a beautiful Gates Ajar. Uncle Cy Smith said if they'd jist 'a' thought t've had th' gates opened a little airlier, they wouldn't a bin no need of a funeral at all—th' blamed mule would 've kicked goal! No, they aint no nymphs in Hope—leastwise I aint never seen none. Here we be!"

Uncle Henry grasped his drab valise and his bulging umbrella and started zig-zagging for the door. Reginald followed, moodily.

"You kin take it or leave it alone, Gib Hudson. I reckon I know what a left-handed livery stable, filled with a lot of antiquated arks an' crow-baits is wuth about as well as you do. Be it a go or not?"

Uncle Henry stood in the doorway of the Hope Livery, one foot poised in the direction of the street, a roll of bills in his right hand, a masterful glint in his eye. Gib shuffled nervously from one foot to the other. He should have at least \$10 more.

"Now, Henry—"

"Deal's off!"—planting the poised foot firmly on the sidewalk and plunging his hand inside his vest for his bill-book, preparatory to replacing the currency. As Gib saw the money disappear, he recovered promptly:

"Well, take it; but, darn ye, Hank, ye know it's wuth more!"

When the papers had been signed and the money transferred, Uncle Henry turned to his nephew. "How much money do you owe back yonder?"

Reginald told him.

"Take this. They's a train in ten minutes. Git it, pay your debts an' ketch another home as quick as th' Lord'll let you. You're in business now an' hosses wont take keer of themselves. Shed them silk socks, git a pair of overalls—an' fergit you're a poet, for you aint!"

The landlady was glad to see Reginald. "There wasn't any hurry about the money, Mr. Worthington. Lawsy me, no! Did you sell one of your poems?"

"Er—no; it was my birthright. I beg your pardon, Mrs. Jones—and, by the way, I am leaving for the west to-night. You—you have been very kind to me here and I—I thank you. Good-by!"

When the door closed behind her erstwhile lodger, Mrs. Jones stored the money in a safe place and mused regretfully as she caught a glimpse of Reginald disappearing around the corner. "He was *such* a nice man—and, well, somehow a literary gentleman al-lus does lend caste to a boardin' house. I'm sorry he's gone!"

At 477 Aster street, however, a different reception awaited Reginald. There *was* a girl, of course, and she lived at this number with her mother. It wasn't Hortense that Worthington feared—she had vowed many a time to be true until he had become a great poet—but, rather, the ultimatum of her mater! The heart of the young man beat with apprehension and a dull, sickening feeling permeated his entire system.

Ten minutes later Reginald was standing hat in hand in the drawing-room before a refined but determined woman. On a Chippendale sofa in the background, Hortense, a pitiable bit of *lingerie* and sacrificial woe, lay sobbing in the complete abandonment of her grief.

"The very idea! My daughter engaged to a common livery-stable keeper! Never!"

Sniffing superciliously, she showed the dazed Reginald the door. Bump number five had been delivered straight from the shoulder and it jarred him!

The Suburban Express, in all its

funereal experience, never carried a heavier heart westward than went that night in the anatomy of Reginald DeForrest Worthington. All was indeed lost! Not only had he been left an orphan, robbed of his family heritage, buffeted by adverse literary waves and rudely coupled with a livery-stable, but now Love was gone! The tenderest passion known to man had been ruthlessly wrenched from his heart! With one fatal blow Fate had blasted him from the summit of Mount Helicon to the uttermost deeps of Inferno. In vain he repeated to himself that all work was noble. Of what value was success without Hortense? He groaned aloud in his anguish. Truly, the aroma of the stable was on his clothes!

"Be they anything the matter with you?" asked Uncle Henry after two weeks of lackadaisical interest in the livery business on the part of his nephew. "Aint you feelin' well?"

"Yes, thank you, Uncle Henry"—with a far-away look in his eyes. "I'm glad you came over. I think the meter of this livery-stable needs attention."

"What's th' matter? Don't th' superintendent of water read it?"

"Why, I think the bay horse's meter needs to be shod. She cast—"

Uncle Henry spat a broom-straw from his mouth and grinned. "You mean Ol' Kit's feet need shoein'?"

"Yes, sir. You see she's been going barefoot for about a week now and she don't seem to be able to scan the lines just right. She overreaches—or something, and interferes with her rhythm. She starts all right with a sort of anapestic gait, cuffs herself on the forefoot, lilts into trochaic, cuffs herself again and ends up by traveling iambic pentameter! A mare or a poem that does that needs fixing, Uncle!"

Uncle Henry asked the question bluntly: "Young feller, are you in love?"

Reginald knew there must be no quibbling.

"Yes, sir"—meekly.

"Tell me about it!"

Reginald told him.

"An' she drove you away—I mean th'

old un—because th' army of hoss was on your clothes?"

"Yes, sir"—sadly.

"What'd you say th' name was?"

"Hortense Smiley — Mrs. Abner Smiley, her mother, 477 Aster street."

"Nephew, you run this livery-barn for a few days. I've got some business in the city that needs lookin' after!"

When Uncle Henry returned, late Saturday evening, he walked into the office of the livery, smiling.

"I've got a letter for you, Reginald. Yes, it's from *her*. Now, after you've read it, you dust around lively an' git this business goin'. This place has been a Vale of Cashmere tears long enough!"

Reginald opened the letter and read:

Dear Reggie:—We had the funniest time with your Uncle Henry—but he's a dear! Mother was very angry at first. Why, he actually told her that the perfume of the livery stable on the clothes of a man that worked was more honorable than attar-of-roses on four-fifths of all the cane-carrying sap-heads in town. He told her what a brave fight you are making and said as long as a young man was willing to work and work hard, it didn't make much difference whether he wrote novels or drove mules—he was on the right track. He told mother that the right kind of a man could exalt any brand of labor. He said you had the stuff in you to succeed because your mother was a Watson. Momsie told him to go but he kept right on talking until she half agreed to give you a chance. I never was so surprised in my life—the way he handled mother!

Hortense.

P. S.—Of course you understand, Reggie, that it is you I love, not your business. I have faith in you. Back up Uncle Henry's estimate. Yours forever.

H. S.

"Uncle Henry—" Reginald spoke determinedly, as though defying a refusal. "Uncle Henry, I want you to invest \$10,000 more in this business!"

Uncle Henry brought down his tilted chair with a jerk. The boy evidently was crazy.

"We're behind the times. This is the horseless age. What we need is an automobile livery!"

"Th' gasoline smell'll git on your clothes jist th' same, Reggie!"



"Never mind the aroma; I've past that. I'm telling you the gospel truth. We've got to wake up!"

"Um—well, don't go t' sleep again right soon, my boy; them dreams of yours is expensive—but blast me if I don't believe you're about right! I'll go you!"

One night two years later the telephone in Uncle Henry's house rang loudly and long at the unseemly hour of midnight.

"Well, great horn spoons, quit a jigglin' that thing in my ear. Here I be! What is it?" and Uncle Henry pulled furtively at his night-robe where it warped across the back as he sat cross-legged before the telephone. "Eh, what's that? You, Reggie? Formed a

new company! Airship livery! Well, I'll be doggoned! Yep, sounds good. You're th' vice-president. Well, who in thunder is th' president? Hank Worthington? Don't know him. Named after me? What's that? Great Scott, you don't say? Eight pounds! Hooray, bully for you! Er—hold th' phone a minute, Reggie."

Uncle Henry set the receiver on end, took a good, strong hold on his refractory night-gown and gave it a yank. "Still there? Yes, I want t' suggest one more name for th' board of directors. Yes. Mrs. Uncle Henry! Haw haw! Who is she? Why, she's Hank's grandma! Yep, married to-day in Chicago. S'prised you, eh? Well, we'll be right over. Good-by!"



The decline of a June day was around him

## The Substitute

BY ALLAN UPDEGRAFF

ILLUSTRATED BY F. R. HARPER

TO the friendly, assured purring of his four-cylindere motor, a lone motor-cyclist glided down a grass-grown by-way, around the head of a little, blue lake, and up the sharp rise beyond. There was a venturesome alertness about the

way in which his eyes gauged the inequalities of the road, a cavalier abandon in his sure direction of the thing that served him for a horse. It required no great stretch of the imagination to see in him the legitimate successor of a hard-



ware-clad knight-errant of the Middle Ages.

The long-shadowed decline of a June day was around him. Through the sun-fired tangle of blackberry bushes at his side, he could catch glimpses of a deserted apple-orchard, long since grown up to brush and weeds. The massy ruins of a four-square stone chimney, once the typical center of a typical Berkshire home, loomed up from a lilac thicket at one side of the road. He stopped his machine to speculate on the desolation of the place. Six miles ahead, he knew, the by-way he was following debouched upon the new "State Road" for automobiles; but the place before him might have kept the vestiges of a remote, forgotten civilization.

He looked at his watch, several minutes later, hastily remounted his machine and sent it up the rise with an unwarrantable amount of essence exploding in its cylinders. As it leaped forward the purring was broken in upon by snarls of grinding metal, and then silenced altogether. The sounds indicated a crushed bearing too plainly to make an examination necessary. The solitary tourist got out his road map and located the nearest black dot that stood for a house.

The two miles as measured by his map stretched to nearer four as measured by hard experience, and twilight was gathering in when he made out a long, low, gray roof among rock maples a quarter of a mile before him. With a prayer that the place be not one of the many abandoned farms thereabouts, he hurried on through the gathering dusk. The grass had been cleanly mowed about the maple-shadowed door-yard, but the westward-fronting windows of the house showed no light except a pale reflection from the west; nor was there any sign of smoke from the squat stone chimney in the center of the roof-tree.

A stone wall stretched to the edge of the door-yard, and as he passed the end of it on his way to the front door, he was aware of a sudden sound at his side. He faced toward the sound, and stood still. An old man had arisen from behind the wall. The man was short, thin, and wrinkled, with round-cropped,

snow-white whiskers, and prominent eyes that showed a good deal of white. A little before him, in the position which shooters know as "ready," he held a double-barreled gun. For a little time, except for the rapid exploration of his prominent eyes, he stood without movement.

"Well—" he said at last, like a man who struggles to break some spell of silence; "well—ye're a bit early."

"I guess you've made a mistake!" In spite of his attempt to appear at ease, the motor-cyclist's voice convicted him of bravado in his own ears.

"I had a break-down back there a couple of miles," he continued, still with the consciousness that his words carried no weight. "I'm looking for some one to take charge of my motor-cycle. I've got to get back to Springfield to-night."

The old man made no sign that he had heard.

"I thought I might strike an automobilist on the State Road who'd take me," explained the other patiently. "Maybe I could get you to go after my machine in the morning?"

Still the old man continued his silent observation; then, "I guess ye're the one that's mekin' the mistake!" he declared harshly. "Take me for a simple, do ye? But, considerin' the circumstances, I'll try to go easy on ye. Ye've an honest, decent look about ye; maybe we can come to an agreement, if ye'll spare your fairy stories."

"I tell you, you've made a mistake! What I've told you—"

"Maybe we can argy better about that in the house there; ye go first. Go on. I mean fair by ye. I got no intentions to hurt ye, if ye mean fair by me. Go on!"

The younger man hesitated a moment; a sort of amused curiosity gradually got the better of the irritation on his tanned face.

"Well, I'll go!" he concluded. "I certainly 'mean fair' by you; and I'll be glad to learn what you're driving at."

To the door of the little house they marched in silent single file. At a sign from the old man, the leader lifted the latch and entered. He found himself in a square, low room, bare as to walls and

floor, with several blank patches on the ceiling where the plaster had crumbled away. A lantern, barely alight, stood in one corner. Beside the cavernous stone fire-place was a bench made of a pine slab, with legs pegged in at the four corners. A rough wooden table occupied the center of the room. There was no other furniture.

"Sit down," ordered the old man, motioning toward the bench.

He took the lantern from the corner, turned it up, and set it on the table. Placing his gun conveniently beside it, he stationed himself, half standing, half leaning on the table, opposite his guest. The light of the lantern threw a magnified silhouette of him against the ceiling and opposite wall. There was a short span of silence.

"Well—" he said suddenly; "well—ye're as decent-appearin' a young feller as I've had the pleasure of lookin' at this many a day. What's your name, and what's your business? What sort of a man be ye, anyway?"

"Why—Holyard's my name; and my business—"

The motor-cyclist broke off abruptly, with a sort of mirthful snort.

"Look here!" he protested; "what's the use of all this? I can't see—"

"If ye'll answer my questions," interrupted the old man with dignity, "maybe we can find out what's the use sooner than if ye mek a joke of everything. What ye may tek for a joke mayn't be a joke to me, as ye ought to know."

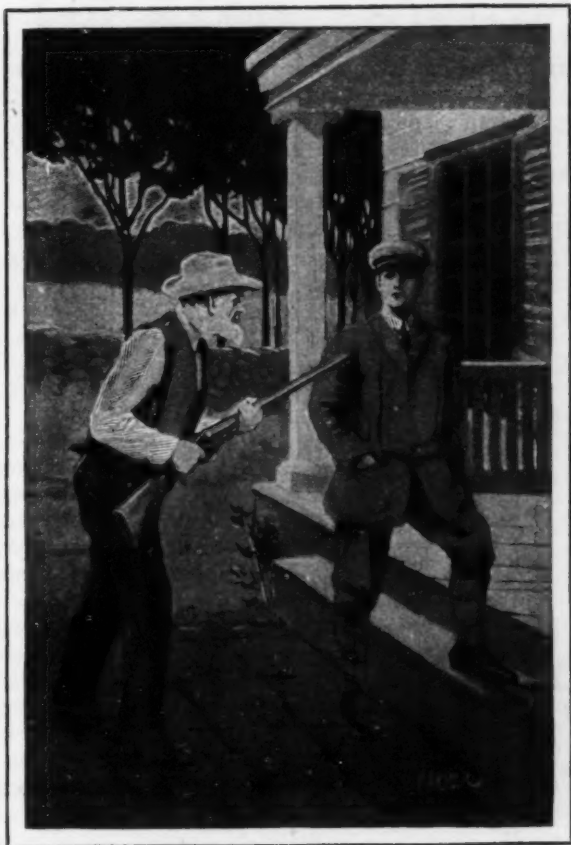
"I beg your pardon," said Holyard civilly. "My business is being the Sunday editor of a Springfield newspaper."

"Be ye a married man?"

"What?"

"Be ye married?"

"No!"



"I mean fair by ye—Go on!"

"Have ye any sisters?"

"No; I haven't; but look here—"

"Be your parents alive?"

"My father is."

"It may explain. Maybe it's thoughtlessness an' your detached situation in life that's responsible for what ye've done."

"I say!" protested the young man, straightening up belligerently; "before we go any further, I wish you'd just explain what I *have* done!"

"That I will!" snapped the other, "ye can have it in your own hand!" His face had hardened, his voice was thin and sharp, the whites of his eyes began to show threateningly. "In the circumstances, I expected ye to lie! But ye may spare your ingen-oo-ity! Ye had best understand that I'm not guessin' about what I know! Here!"

His withered fingers extended a bit of white paper, folded letter-wise. Holyard took the paper, unfolded it, and held it down between his knees so that the light of the lantern might fall upon it. The writing was of a quick, flowing character: rather feminine, he thought, than masculine. The matter might have done credit to a sentimental college sophomore.

It began floridly:

My Morning Star of Light! For I find in my old Webster that "Lucinda" means "dawn-born," beloved, and I am sure the reference must be to a star—when will you shine upon my heart's darkness once more? To-night I shall be at the old place, among the maples of the Old House. A coffin-box with a roof, you called it once; but to me its time-eaten walls are more beautiful than your grand new house—though how can that be, since you live there? All the way the spinning wheels of my car will murmur, "Lucinda! Lucinda! Lucinda!" And the wind that rushes by will whisper the same sweet, old-fashioned name in my ears. I shall be there, waiting, waiting; and the stars, and the sky, and the big, somber maples shall be hateful to me if you do not come. Oh, come! Come while the after-glow is still in the sky! I have no past, no future. Look at me. Forget everything save this only: I love you, I love you, I love you!

There was no date line, and no signature.

"Well?" demanded the old man, in a strained, crackling voice. "Well, what have ye to say now?"

"Only this," replied the other gently: "I can't see anything very incriminating about the letter—except its style. And I'm the wrong man, anyway, so I'm not responsible for that. I'm sorry—that is—"

"Ye liar!"

Holyard looked up to find the old man's face transfigured. The whites of his prominent eyes were showing like a vindictive horse's. His skinny hand reached for the letter and closed upon it with an accipitrine clutch. He growled a malediction as he crushed it back into an inside pocket.

"Maybe ye think she's not good enough for ye—an' all that!" he blurted out, in

a tremulous, suppressed voice. "I'd have ye know she has eddication; she's been to college in Holyoke—she's took prizes for English composition an' calculus! She's had a story published in a magazine! She's a million times too good for ye!"

He paused to catch his breath; his lower lip trembled piteously.

"Young man!" he snarled, "my gran'-father killed a dude from Albany for a good deal less'n ye've done. An' the jury acquitted him, too! I aint mekin' any threats—" He paused, and the sound of his heavy breathing filled the room. "But ye got to fix it up! Ye got to! Understand? I mean it—gol-ding it! Ye hear me?"

He stepped back from the table, laying one hand upon his gun, drew forth a handkerchief and made uncertain dabs at his forehead. In great distress of spirit, rather more the result of sympathy than of his own personal predicament, Holyard watched him.

Without further words from his prisoner to inflame it, the old man's wrath rapidly cooled.

"There—ding it!" he muttered, putting away his handkerchief and smoothing his beard. "I mean fair by ye—I was young myself once. Maybe, if I was in your place, I'd be lyin' as fast as ye be. But ye got to fix it up with her! Go along through that door yender. I got her in the kitchen."

Holyard got hastily to his feet. It was on the tip of his tongue to repeat his protests, to declare his innocence of the whole affair. But the sight of the old man's eyes, as if in expectance of more protests, beginning to bulge and glare, operated to make him change his mind. Besides, the situation was not without a certain pungent appeal to his imagination.

"This door?" he asked quietly.

"That's it!"

He opened it, and passed into a wide, bare room. The windows had been boarded up on the outside, and the place smelled of long closure to sun and air.

"Go on," ordered the old man, following. "Go through that door at the far end."

By the uncertain light of the lantern, Holyard saw that a hasp had recently been fitted to the door, securely fastening it to a staple in the door post.

"Go on; open it," commanded the voice at his back.

But for a moment he hesitated. The possibilities concealed by that door were awkward: some awkwardly ludicrous, some awkwardly tragic, but all awkward. The lady incarcerated there would be greatly shocked and disappointed to see him; he might be even more shocked and disappointed to see the lady. And then it crossed his mind that ladies who inspired florid rhetoric from Browning-quoting automobilists were not likely to be so shocking—

"Go on; open it!"

He threw off the hasp, with a fine show of carelessness, and strode into the room. As the lantern flickered in behind him, he fixed his eyes upon a young girl standing before a door, in the remotest corner. She wore a simple, close-fitting dress, with a white guimpe, and white sleeves; and the effect of the light was such that she seemed embossed against the dark panel of the door. Her hair was parted in the middle and combed plainly back, with a little fluffy fullness over the ears. Her face, as well as he could make out by the upward glow of the lantern, was of the type sometimes called old-fashioned, because it is of no ephemeral fashion, with features rather elongated and characterful than soft and round. Her brown and red coloring was accentuated by excitement, and her big, dark eyes snapped indignantly. While the old man placed the lantern on a rusty, iron sink, she stood and stared at Holyard. Holyard returned the stare with usury.

"Well, Miss," broke in the old man, facing her; "you can come away from that door. It's padlocked on the outside."

He turned to Holyard.

"What have you got to say to her?" he demanded. "I baint a man of many words. Do ye mean fair, or do ye not? Speak your intentions, and I'll be witten to 'em."

"Ask her," returned Holyard, "if she has ever seen me before."

The old man's jaws shut with a click.

He shifted his gun uneasily and glared, with widening eyes.

"So that's your game, eh?" he burst out, in a thin, savage cackle. "Don't know anything 'bout each other—never laid eyes on each other before, I s'pose?"

Abruptly he produced a big gold watch and looked at it.

"I'll give ye just half-an-hour to come to an understandin'!" he cried. "If ye keep on tryin' to mek a fool o' me, I'll—I'll kill him—that's all! It'll be one good deed to my credit—'fore I die!"

He backed watchfully toward the door.

"Grandfather!" cried the girl, roused to a sudden paroxysm of protest. "Grandfather, don't—"

The door slammed shut.

"Ye can call gran'father," barked the old man, from the other side, "when ye've showed yourself fit to be my gran'daughter! I'll be waiting outside—ye needn't try to break out, neither!"

There was the sound of a hasp-hook being forced home, and then the echoing "*thump, thump,*" of heels as the old man passed through the empty rooms beyond.

Somewhat to his own surprise, Holyard found that his immediate thoughts turned on the facts that his khaki riding-clothes were rather the worse for wear and travel-stains, and that it was two days since he had had a shave. While he meditated these matters, he doubtfully eyed the young lady. She had seated herself on the edge of a dilapidated wood-box, beside the door, and looked extremely distressed and uncomfortable. Suddenly she put her hands to her face and gave vent to a series of spasmodic sounds.

"I beg your pardon," said Holyard, after enduring a short time in silence: "but would you mind telling me whether you're crying or laughing?"

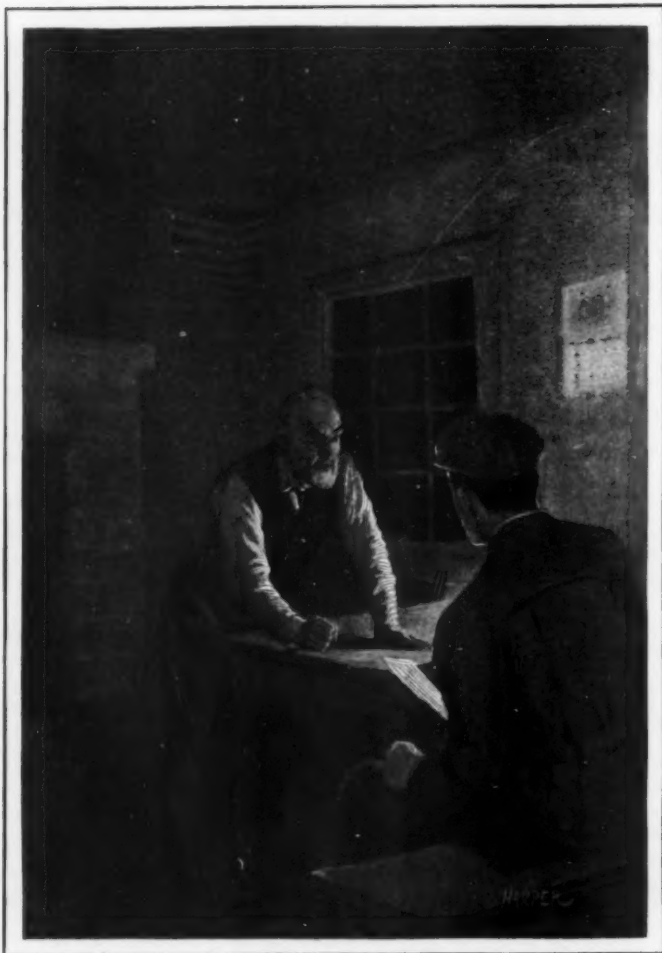
"Bub-bub-both!" she blurted.

"Oh," said Holyard, as if the matter were entirely settled.

"You look so funny," she explained, blinking. "And so scared."

He leaned against the sink, meditatively scratched a few flakes of dried mud from the front of his coat and tried the length of his beard with his thumb.





"Ye liar!"

"I may look funny; but I'm not scared," he protested. "As a matter of fact, it would tickle me immensely to have your amiable grandfather pot me with his blunderbuss."

"Perhaps you think he wouldn't do it!" she retorted, bristling up. "That's just where the serious part comes in; he would! And he'd think he was earning his right to heaven by doing it, too!"

"Not much danger, I guess," returned Holyard. "I could have taken his gun away from him half-a-dozen times since he held me up out there in the road."

"Well, why didn't you?"

"I dunno," he replied cheerfully.

"But you looked awfully scared," she insisted, "when you came in."

"Not exactly scared; well — say, surprised."

The sense of the latter half of this remark was largely conveyed by his way of making it. Fully expressed, it would probably have run something like this:

"Naturally enough, I didn't expect to be confronted by anything so unusual, so startlingly interesting, as the sight of your slender self in *bas-relief* against the panel of that door. I have enough appreciation of the values of composition and *chiaroscuro* to recognize a masterpiece when it's stuck up in front of my face. I was struck with admiration, in the full sense of that cheapened word's derivation from the Latin *admirari*; filled with awe and amazement,

spellbound with wonder and worshipful approbation."

She seemed, to his great satisfaction, to take his meaning much as he had intended it should be taken.

As if to verify her impression, she raised her head, and for a moment they looked at each other intently. The misty golden gloom of the room, with its plethora of piled shadows, gave them both a flavor of the unusual, of the romantic. It served as a sort of accelerating medium, in which developments that would ordinarily require several hours for consummation might be obtained in a few minutes.



Something passed between them, in the brief course of their mutual gaze, differentiating them, in each other's eyes, from all the other young men and women in the world. Though I had the pen of Henry James and of George Meredith, I could not explain how such things happen. Nor, with all their striving, have they ever explained—nor has anybody else. All we know is such things do happen with great frequency and regularity—as the leaf happens, in due season, on the well-conducted vine.

But, with the peculiar perversity common in such cases, Holyard put down his new, vital feeling with all the power of his reason. Even such a bagatelle as the sophomoric love-letter he had recently read loomed large with objections. He knitted his brows and took counsel of the floor.

"Possibly the original young man—the gentleman for whom I'm substituting," he suggested, "will happen along and clear matters up."

Miss Lucinda seemed to understand the inspiration of this remark, also. She smiled.

"Oh," she remarked, in a tone of the most casual interest, "grandfather showed you the letter?"

"Yes."

"I'm afraid we can't count on him," she returned deliberately. "I have reason to believe that he's most undependable. In fact—there isn't any such person."

Holyard's blank "Oh!" was capable of many interpretations.

"I'm sorry to disappoint you," she resumed, perversely choosing the worst and falsest. "You

see—as a matter of fact, I wrote that letter myself—to myself. Silly of me—of course."

She was blushing furiously now, and, despite her attempted nonchalance, heavy-headed with shame.

"I'd just got a letter," she resumed, evidently with the determination to put the best possible front on the matter, "from a nice young farmer over in Tyringham who thinks he's in love with me. It was all about fishing, and haying, and his mother's preserves, and his new pair of oxen: and I just sat down and turned out a letter as different from his as I could make it. I—I managed to concoct a—peach, didn't I?"

There was an appeal in her voice for more than a surface understanding of her foolishness. Back of the confession was the whole monotony of her life on the decaying farm of her fathers: her desire, her parching thirst for the well-springs of romance and beauty with which her imagination filled the World Outside—



"I'm sorry to disappoint you," she resumed

the Big World that was linked to her loneliness only by books and periodicals, and the "State Road." Holyard's imagination tingled in response.

"I tried to explain to grandfather how it was," she continued, plainly secure in the knowledge of her confessor's sympathy, although he had not spoken, "but he was in a towering rage, and he would not listen to me. You see, he's always been as careful of me as if I were salt or sugar and would melt if I got caught in the rain. I believe he inherits his—his ideas along that line from his grandfather; just as he inherits his grandfather's eyes. And very proud he is of them both, too!"

"I see," said Holyard, nanaging to put a good deal of understanding into the simple verb.

"I tried to get him to consult grandma," she resumed, "but he wouldn't. She thinks we're just out for a walk. She's the only one he'll listen to when he's got an idea in his head."

Holyard cleared his throat abruptly, and demanded:

"Miss Lucinda, can you make apple dumplings?"

She straightened up with a little gasp.

"Apple dumplings," he repeated sternly, "with cider sauce?"

"Why—yes!"

"Good! And you like the poems of Mr. Robert Browning?"

"Yes."

"Good again! And the novels of Jane Austen, and of Thomas Hardy?"

"Yes—but I've only read one of Hardy's," she replied, mystified, but with great readiness to enter into his mood. "Say—what is this? An oral exam.?"

"Exactly—I'm getting a basis—inductive method!" he declared. "Soon I'll be ready for some deductions. And you loathe, despise, and forever abjure Henry James, Laura Jean Libbey, and The Duchess?"

"I never read anything by any of 'em!"

"Splendid! Couldn't be better! Now, Miss Lucinda, exactly how old are you?"

"Why—that's rather—twenty years—and—seven months!"

"Magnificent! You pass—with the

highest possible marks! Now as to myself: I have all the good points I've discovered in you, with the exception of skill along the dumpling-foundry line. But I offer, as a substitute, great abilities as a *connoisseur* along the line in question. I'm twenty-six years old, and smoking is my only bad habit. I separate a Springfield newspaper from thirty-five dollars every week for services as Sunday editor. My crying need in life is a—stabilizer of my affections—that is to say—"

He coughed, growled an admonition at himself, and became serious.

"In fact, Miss Lucinda," he said, scowling as if the matter were one of the greatest perplexity and wondering even to his own mind, "I believe I'm in love with you!"

The girl got quickly to her feet, with something like fear and a great deal of perplexity, in her face. They looked straight into each other's eyes, measuring, weighing, wondering at the remarkable results.

"You're—you're not making fun of me?" she begged, rather than inquired. "You don't think I'm just a back-woods —"

"God bless you—no!" he cried. "May I be eternally condemned if I ever thought of such a thing! Something seems to have got hold of me! I'm not my own—I've been bought with a price—There! Don't mind that, will you please? I always talk like a fool when I feel most serious!"

He took a step toward her; and then, by what was apparently a stupendous effort of the will, stood still.

"Before I proceed," he said, looking at her with tragi-comic entreaty, "wont you tell me whether you don't feel—just a little—as if something—well—sort of—had hold of you?"

She stared at him for a long second, with wide, startled, perplexed eyes, as if considering the possibility of such a thing.

"A—little!" she admitted recklessly.

The intervening space disappeared as by magic—white magic.

"Something has *now*, anyway!" he whispered.

# "Jackal"

BY H. B. MARRIOTT WATSON

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ILLUSTRATED BY HERMANN C. WALL

WE were three days out before I discovered he was in the forward hatch where the passengers' luggage labeled "not wanted on the voyage" was stored. As it happened, one of them changed her mind and did want a big dress trunk. It chanced to lie at the very bottom, which is always the way in such matters and I was put about by the unnecessary trouble she gave us. She—Miss Shepperson—was an angular lady verging on forty, very skittish and fly and as affable as they are made. She was godmother to the whole mess: at least that was how she looked to me. I believe she designed herself for another rôle—*ingenue*, let us say. No officer on deck at night came amiss to her, and the things she wanted to know—! Anyway, this tale's not about Miss Shepperson primarily. The fact that she wanted her dress-basket and set us hauling about the whole contents of the upper hold, disclosed Carter to us. We had to rig a derrick to shift some of the heavier boxes, and as she had tenderly made it a point with me that I should do her this favor, I was looking out for Miss Shepperson's kit. I thought I heard a scampering and put it down to rats, when one of the men called out:

"No, you don't, Lije," and there was a scuffle.

"Bagged something, Sir," he said presently.

"What the mischief!" I began, and he emerged from behind the litter, holding by the waistband a little, stout-faced, uneasily grinning fellow, as dusty as a miller.

"What's that?" said I.

"Stowaway!" said Perrin, and I stared.

The little figure wore a sickly smile,

as he cast up his eyes awkwardly and with some appearance of desperation at me.

"How the deuce has he been living?" I inquired curiously.

"He's got a tidy allotment back here, Sir," said another man who had been exploring. "Biscuit box, canned meat, bottle of whisky or something. I believe he's been getting at the baggage."

It was at this that Carter broke silence.

"S'elp me, I aint, Governor; 'struth!" said he in an odd, wheezy voice that stamped his origin at once upon him.

What was this grotesque little Cockney lubber doing here, a thousand miles off the Golden Gate?

"Who are you?" I demanded severely.

"Jackal, Sir!" says the dusty wretch, rubbing some of the dirt from his sleeve upon his face.

"What?" I asked sharply. "Say it again."

By the exercise of patience and some intelligent guessing, I extracted his name as Jack Hall, his description as bird fancier, and his late address as Stepney, London. These things taken together seemed to sum him up. He looked such a miserable shrimp of a man, such a forlorn waif, cast upon an alien and unsympathetic world that I felt sorry for him. But everyone knows what is in store for stowaways. He went forward before the boots of the contemptuous sailors; and his insignificant case was reported to the captain. The *Sacramento* was a boat plying between San Francisco and Sydney in the Trans-Pacific service. She called at Honolulu and Auckland, and there was a fair complement of passengers that voyage. Rumors of the stowaway reached a bevy of ladies on the

first-class deck and set them in a flutter. You know how small a matter affects everyone on shipboard after a day or two of the ceaseless sea. A pretty girl, Ethel Agnew, from Chicago, stopped me as I was passing and demanded the news. A real stowaway seemed fun to her.

"It isn't fun to the little devil," said I.

"Oh, what will they do with him?" she asked.

"Stealing a passage is as bad as stealing anything else," remarked Miss Shepperson, "but I hope they won't flog him and put him in irons."

"No; we always make a practice of keel-hauling them," said I.

"What's that?" asked Miss Agnew; and so I had to explain my little joke.

The captain settled the affair by kicking Hall on deck to do odd jobs. He was a queer little man with a bubbling good nature which nothing might check. He also had a veritable genius for doing the wrong thing, which constantly brought him into rough places with the crew. He was alert like a fly, buzzing about where he wasn't wanted. If two of the men were chatting together, Jackal was bound to butt in, listening to a private conversation, or joining in a talk which had no concern for him. He had as much tact as a mosquito, and sensitiveness as a rhinoceros. His skin was a tough hide, and he couldn't have blushed even under a ruby light. If any oaf tumbled into a ship's company out of a pantomime, that was Jack 'All. And somehow or another, he was bound to keep on worrying Miss Shepperson.

Miss Shepperson, as I have indicated, was a trial.

As purser for a matter of twenty years, I reckon I have seen most kinds of women, and more kinds among them than I am caring about. Miss Shepperson seemed to me to class herself pretty well, but she struck me as overdoing it. She fixed onto the third officer, a decent, foolish fellow without any knowledge of women, whose name was Corfe. Corfe was fairly taken by her, and Corfe, for whom I had a liking, came to me on a mission when I had rebuffed Angela—for that was her name. Angela was always anxious to be on some commission

of inquiry. She wanted to inspect the engines, wanted to go down to the stoke hole—which was no affair of mine; wanted to know if she could go through the galleys. I was tired of Angela before we had been two days out, and more particularly when she began to chop and change about her baggage. If you please, the day after we had fetched out her dress-basket, and "Jackal," she found out that it wasn't the one she wanted. Would I be so good as to have it put back and haul out the right one, labeled No. 2? I tell you, she sickened me of her sex. That is why, I believe, I took a sympathy for "Jackal." He was using the squeegee with bare feet when I was yarning with a handful of passengers two mornings after his discovery, when Miss Agnew came from the companion-way in a flutter. "Mr. Post," she said, breaking in on us, "My pearls have been stolen."

I confess the statement gave me a turn, saddling me as it did of necessity with a certain sense of responsibility.

"Are you sure, Miss Agnew?" I asked. "Couldn't you—"

"No," she shook her head emphatically. "The jewel case was broken open, and the rope wrenched from its fastenings. It was stolen without a doubt."

"Good Lord!" ejaculated some one. "That's the second."

"What?" I wheeled round upon the speaker, a genial man of forty, Arbuthnot by name.

"Didn't you know?" he asked in surprise. "It was Hallows—he lost a big roll of notes the night before last."

"I heard nothing of it," I said shortly.

"Ah," said Arbuthnot lightly. "I suppose he didn't want— Perhaps he thought it was his own fault."

His glance was significant, as if reminding me mutely of Hallows' habits, which it would be deplorable to reveal before ladies. Hallows was a soaker; and he was also a wealthy man. To complain of his loss would entail an investigation of his condition when he went to bed. I saw this at a glance, and the reason for his secrecy; but the second revelation maddened me.

"I must go into this at once, Miss



Agnew," I said bluntly, motioning her aside.

My investigations, however, ended in nothing, and I walked down a blind alley; that was all. The pearls had disappeared, and left no mark behind. Inquiries elicited no information. A thief in the night was abroad, a specter that walked by darkness. It was a disquieting idea. Naturally I felt badly and I took every step I could think of in the direction of discovery. Miss Agnew was, of course, upset by her loss, but she was very good about it, and relied upon me without in any way embarrassing my efforts. But twenty-four hours went by without furnishing the ghost of a clue, and I was exasperated. If Hallows was fool enough to go to bed drunk, Hallows need not look for much commiseration; but Miss Agnew was in another case.

It added to my chagrin that she took it so well. At four on the following afternoon she was under the awnings and reading a novel with a pleasant smile for me as I strolled up. Other passengers were in a little group near by, engaged in talk, the usual talk about the day's run. Miss Shepperson, with a piece of fine lace which she was mending delicately, chatted with the inevitable man, and from the look of her she was enjoying herself. She had always the ostentatious trick of appearing to be so domesticated, but I had met that type before, and I didn't believe in it much. She made eyes at her companion, a wheezing, fat fellow with a hand full of rings, and a pair of binoculars always to his eye. He fancied himself a yachtsman, did

Bentham, but he was only an operator in stock, I believe, with a big cash ledger. Miss Agnew made room for me with her friendly smile, and I began to talk about the theft, but she turned the conversation very prettily. "I'm sure you'll do all that



He was mimicking the "old man"

can be done, Mr. Post," she said.

It was all the handsomer because the pearls were very valuable, and had run into a precious big figure. Well, it was just then that the first incident in the downward progress of "Jackal" occurred. There was a small bird in the rigging, a spindrift blown out to sea from some happy island, and the passengers were watching it. Miss Agnew asked some questions as to its fate, and her sympathies being engaged by the desperate and weary wanderer, cried out:

"Oh, poor thing, couldn't we capture it and set it free on land? Oh, I wish I could."

Hall, who was at some job near, in



his undisciplined, frank, inquisitive way, dropped what he held as he gaped upwards.

"I'll get it for you, lydy," he said, and nipped up the ratlines sharply.

I made no protest, though I might have done so; I confess the naïve effrontery of the small man amused me. No, it wasn't effrontery, it was irresponsibility. We watched his progress to the mainyard, when he halted and made some "contraption" with a handkerchief and a piece of string. I believe Jackal knew about as much of birdcatching as any man alive, but it was certain this poor bird was on its last legs. He was a good hand with birds, but he was no sailor. I don't know how he managed the trick, but in two shakes he had the bird under his net, and proved his mettle as a bird fancier. The next moment he failed as a sailor. The sea was ordinary, but there was a swell on, and somehow Jackal missed his hold. He fell, clutching, struck the awning—which broke his tumble—and came to deck on a cushion which Miss Shepperson had set out by her for luxurious use.

I ran forward, to where the little man was dazedly endeavoring to pick himself up, with a sickly sort of smile.

"Ope I done no mischief," he got out, and lifted his elbow out of Miss Shepperson's work bag.

The episode frightened the ladies, and Miss Shepperson turned white, for he had shaved her rather closely. She gathered her bag and things together and fled in alarm. But after all it was the "Jackal" who was the worst sufferer.

"Anything broken, Hall?" I asked.

"Naow, Sir," he answered ruefully. "But I lorst the bloomin' sparrer."

Of course this kind of behavior could not be overlooked, and "Jackal" was kicked downstairs, to get the bumps of the steward's-room. It was odd how ill-fated he seemed to be. The following morning Bentham came to me in a stew, puffing and red of face.

"Post, I've been robbed," he said apoplectically—"robbed of valuable bonds."

I think my jaw began to look grim, for he went on more quietly. He said

that he had been awakened about three in the morning, as far as he knew, by a sound in the cabin, and had found some one rummaging in his boxes. He got up, and tried to switch the light on, but couldn't find the key. The thief was evidently alarmed by his movements, and stopped. Then in the silence Bentham fumbled—feeling with one hand, then striking out with the other. He said that he hit the thief with his clenched fist very hard, and that there was a muffled cry. Then the door opened and something slipped through. When he reached the deck (for he had a state cabin) there was no one there.

"But I marked him," he said. "Look here, Post,"—and he showed his ringed hand. There was a large intaglio on the central finger. "I felt that go into him. I've marked my man on the face or somewhere," he ended complacently.

Here was the accursed thing again, and with no clue once more. Of course the affair was the talk of the whole ship forthwith, and a very good entertainment for them, but it was no fun for me. The Captain gave me half-an-hour in his cabin, and by the end of it I was sick and moody. I didn't turn up to lunch in the saloon, and I spent the whole of the afternoon in futile investigations. I was worried, and I began to feel as if I were the criminal, and the whole company held me responsible.

When I got to the dinner table, the soup was being served, and here was Jackal's second fall from grace. He had been utilized by the stewards as a substitute for one who was on the sick-list, and he was carrying plates furiously from the kitchen when I entered. I didn't see the whole of the accident, only the culmination. But it seems that Hall, running forward with a plate of clear soup to deliver to the second steward, tripped on something, and like a land-lubber lost his footing and discharged the contents of his basin right across the table full on the evening toilet of, (if you please) Miss Shepperson!

This was an outrage beyond forgiveness, and while the lady scurried from the table in a dreadful state of mind, Jack Hall endured the full tide of un-

popularity. He stood rather dazed at first, staring at his victim, and then added to his offense by a sheepish grin on his fat, sleek face.

"I dunno 'ow I did it. It come over me some 'ow," he explained weakly.

That was the little man's last appearance in the saloon; he was kicked even lower, and became an underling in the stoke hole. It was there that I found him one day, stifling and groaning. The heat and the unfamiliar conditions of that purgatory below had played havoc with him. In two days the poor wretch was a wreck. Hearing a rumor of his state, I visited him as he lay on his bunk. He was still able to grin, vacuously, and he made no complaint in response to my questions.

"Seems like I aint got used to it yet," was the strongest expression I could get out of him. But I had eyes in my head, and I knew what this beginning would lead to. I spoke to the Captain and had him removed. He came upstairs then cheerily, and butted forward—a sort of dog and errand-boy to the fore-castle. There he was subjected to the usual horse-play but anyway, it was better than the inferno below. There was a disposition among some of the men to haze him, but others treated him decently. Clarkson, a stalwart sailor with the health of an ox, who had some authority forward, gave him a contemptuous and amused indulgence. It was not long before Hall found his proper rôle here, as I discovered quite by accident. I had occasion to go forward an evening or two after his rescue, and I heard a babbling, squeaky voice issuing from the men's quarters, followed by a roar of laughter. I investigated, without betraying my presence, and discovered Hall in the center of a group of sailors, gesticulating and performing antics. I listened and watched for a few minutes, and then of a sudden the interpretation was born in upon me. He was mimicking the "old man."

"Mr. Grimes, 'ave 'er kindly turned out, if you 'ave no objection. I like as a rule—not to make a superstition of it—my soup without hairs! It would be the greatest satisfaction to me, Mr. Rose-

wood, if you would remove your objectionable carcass forrard. Don't mention it!"

There was the elaborate, compressed, sarcastic and even embittered style of the old man to the very life. I could have laughed with the men. But of a sudden I felt like rubbing my eyes, for there was my name.

"Mr. Post, Mr. Post—Oh, dear! Mr. Post! Oh, how kind of you! Would you let me—I should like to walk up and down deck with you, while you explain things about the sea. You know I'm so interested in the sea. I 'anker after the sea. You don't moind! Oh, please!"

The reedy pipe ceased, and was greeted with hurroos and salvos, while I believe I felt myself blush. I couldn't bear the woman, and the little cockney had her to the finger-nails. It was a performance of genius. None that had once seen Miss Shepperson could have failed to recognize her. Big Clarkson sat with an amused grin on his face.

"Encore!" he called. "Encore!"

But I had seen and heard enough. The man was a loss to the music-hall stage. His face fell with diverse lines and wrinkles, and its contours changed, with each differing expression of the voice. The fore-castle had got its variety artist.

It had got that, and Hall had an easier time from the moment of the men's recognition of the fact. But there were occasions when the sailors—or some of them—ceased to be audience and reverted to earlier traditions of shell-backs. I got a glimpse of this a little later. It happened just after a personally conducted party had been taken by me through my private domain. Miss Shepperson had always gushed about the delights of shipboard, and was forever asking absurd questions.

"What are lanyards?"

"Did they use those white things in the engine room to stop the ship?"

"Was a donkey engine the same as a derrick?"

"What was the difference between a cathead and a cat's paw?"

That was the sort of query she jerked at you. One got tired of it. However,



He fell, struck the awning, and came to the deck

she was anxious to go below, and so as a matter of fact was Miss Agnew. It was the latter's interposition that had weight with me. I arranged a trip to the stoke-hole with the engineer, and took a party down. Why anyone should ever want to descend into that Hades is more than I can imagine. It reminds me of that story of the House of Lords, when there was a critical division on and the party whips had whipped in everyone they could. One peer who was better known among chorus-girls than in Westminster, and in fact had never been in the House before, found his way to it under urgent pressure, and as is the custom in the case of an unfamiliar face, was stopped by the doorkeeper.

"Excuse me, sir. Are you a peer of the realm?"

"What!" stuttered the gilded youth, his indignation finding vent. "Do you think I'd be such a d-damn fool as to come here if I w-wasn't?"

Why anyone but engineers should go down into the stoke-hole is beyond me.

Well, the day after this adventure was over I was persuaded to take the same lot over my premises, and I showed them what there was to see of interest. Hold, kitchen and galley—there wasn't much to engage the mind, but they were interested in the frozen rooms and also in the strong-room. The frozen milk and the fruit in the cold storage seemed to take the ladies most. They would have been more interested in the strong-room perhaps, if I had told them what it held just then. There were among other things bars of gold to the value of \$250,000. But I said nothing about them.

"I wish I'd given you my pearls to take care of," said Miss Agnew, and then with quick impulsiveness the girl was sorry she had spoken. "Oh, forgive me," she said. "I didn't mean to remind you. I only—"

It did hurt a little, but her penitence was very sweet. I went on deck in rather a blue mood, and I believe I rated some poor devil severely for a trivial fault. It was on the top of that, that I found Hall in the hands of the hazers.

I did not understand at first. I imagined the little cockney was doing his

recognized turn, for by this time the whole ship, knew of his talent. The queer, creaky voice came to me, with bizarre intonations; and I wondered vaguely whom he was mocking. Then I heard something else which arrested me. I peered in.

"Do Rawlings, swine, or I'll push in your face." This was richly decorated language from Ossen, one of the hands.

Uprose on the air after a moment's pause, a cacophonous, obligatory, rasping voice, which it seemed marvelous should spring from so small and meager a man. I laughed, appreciating the mimicry, but next moment was aware of an outbreak within. There was Rawlings, large and menacing, full of wrath and foul words. He twisted the little man's arm, till a cry was extorted.

"Make a mock of me, by —! Would you?" cried Rawlings in the selfsame voice which Hall had cunningly rendered.

"Do Ossen, you—" It ended in a sultry menace. It was there that I "tumbled" to the situation and I intervened. The brutes were in turn exercising their powers, and alternately the poor creature had to mimic this man and be bulldozed by him; and then that man and receive like treatment. It was inhuman. I rescued him, and scattered the beasts, but I did not wager much on "Jackal's" future. I was right; he had to meet the worst on the next day—which brings me right away to my own misfortune.

When I went the rounds in the morning, I was struck with horror to find the bars of gold gone from the strong-room. We were carrying these consigned to a bank in Sydney, and I had not so much as dreamed that any thief could tamper with the strong-room. But there it was—the last of a succession of thefts, beside which all the others looked unimportant. I was a madman all that day. I don't know what I answered the old man, but I know that it must have been fairly wild. He liked me, I think, and I had always a weakness for him, and I remember that he said in another voice at the end of a half-hour's interview, very stiff and formal.

"Well Mr. Post, the whole thing is



ugly. I rely upon you. But I needn't point out how much it is to your interest to clear this up. One theft after another, and this at the last. I doubt if the Company will look at it as leniently as I."

"What do you mean, Sir?" I asked bluntly.

He looked at his nails. "I don't think you and I will have the pleasure of traveling together again," said he.

If anything had been wanting to complete my business it was that. I was marked out for breaking. I was a broken man. The Company was not wanting anyone with such ill-luck. Indeed it might well prove the death warrant of all of us. If we couldn't guard the ship we had better go. That was the fate that awaited us in Sydney, or at best in San Francisco, on the return. By this time the ship was in an open state of excitement and of suspicion also. We had a thief aboard, and one that rose dramatically with each succeeding robbery to a culmination of crime and impudence. I studied the strong-room and I studied such clues as there were; but I have no pretensions to be a detective, and I confessed my incompetence to the second officer, Seabrooke. He was not comforting, and his tone was hardly sympathetic.

"They wont make any bones about that—the Company," he declared. "You've got your neck in a noose. I don't know," he added in a morose tone which accounted for his lack of sympathy. "I don't know how drastic the action will be. Where will the discharges stop?" he demanded angrily. I saw plainly that he was concerned for his own skin, and I had mine to think of; I was in the fore-

front anyway, and I must draw the fire.

The rifling of the strong room had been a neat job. I found that a piece of wire had been inserted in the lock preventing the wards from closing properly. But the trouble was that this must have been done when the steel door was open.

I was puzzling it out when suspicion, stalking the length of the ship, fell upon Hall with dramatic suddenness. Who started the rumor I don't know. It was an atmosphere of suspicion in which we all lived. I heard whispers, and then broad hints. When did the thefts start? On the next day after the Jackal's appearance. They had gone on since then in increasing importance.

"Look here, Post, you can't get out of it," said Bentham to me when I pooh-pooed the idea. "First day Hallows loses his notes; next comes Miss Agnew

with her pearls; third there's my bonds. And last of all there's the gold bars. It began from the moment the man was discovered. And look at his origin! He's an East-end Cockney. I know the breed; the best burglars in the world come from that stock."

I demurred, but the opinion of the ship was, as a rule, against me. That night there was a terrific row in the fore-castle, which was cleared up by Grimes, the third officer. Grimes told me something about it afterwards, but I got the details from the second steward, whom I shrewdly suspected of having been present. It seems that the men resented the general suspicion which had fallen like a fog, and enwrapped everyone, and the sinister rumor about Hall had seized on them and possessed them. Led by Ossen and Rawlings, a knot of the hands



"Stowaway," said Perrin, and—



caught the little cockney and cross questioned him. They urged him to own up, and gave him, as Ossen grimly admitted, a taste of "the third degree." They strapped the man down and put tourniquets on his wrists, and ankles, and when he answered—as they considered—unsatisfactorily, they gave the bandage a twist. This process of torture, for it was no less, was witnessed by a select company, who thus strove to rid themselves severally and jointly, of an ugly suspicion. Men in the mass or mob can be brutal; there is something in the instinct of a mob which is bad, as I have had several occasions to observe. I don't believe that any one of those men would have thought of conduct so outrageous if left to himself; in the mass they were courageously medieval. Evans told me something, but I have reason to believe that he did not tell me all. They had pincers on his finger nails—Lord knows the "third degree" is bad enough, but this was something worse.

"I dunno anythink about it," gasped "Jackal;" and in the severe agonies of the ordeal cried out, "Lumme, it's 'ot coals. Draw it mild, mates. Swelp me, I aint done nothink."

"I on'y seen the gold—"

But at the last he moaned a little, and looked out of troubled eyes. "Mr. Post!" he muttered, calling on my name. That was why I went to see him late in the evening.

Both Grimes and Evans gave me the sequel. In the midst of it entered Clarkson, ruddy, breezy and big. He stared, gathered the sense of the scene, and one man—it may have been Ossen—appealing to him in a jest to appreciate it, he broke out suddenly.

With two steps and two fists he broke up the assembly, anathematizing them in words I may not mention, for a company of cowardly swine. The others fell back before his assault, and being used to recognize his masterfulness, retreated without recovering. "Jackal" was released, and blinked in the face of his rescuer.

"'Taint much!" said he, with the rheum in his eyes.

"Sort of got at my inside some'ow. The boys will 'ave their joke, y'know."

When I saw him, he had quite recovered, and was very thoughtful. He was lying on the bunk by doctor's orders, and smoking the vilest cigar.

"Seems as if they gone mad about this gold, Sir," he said.

"Well, it's a serious business, Hall," said I.

He puffed some of the horrid reek into the air.

"They say you're going to get the chuck over it," said he.

"I think you'd better confine your speculations to your own case, Hall," I said sharply.

He was not perturbed. "Don't get you shut out, Sir," said he earnestly, rising in his bunk, and the action evidently gave him pain, for he fell back with an exclamation. "I take it very kindly of you, Sir, to come and see me, like," he said slowly, with a wrinkled, troubled forehead.

Next evening I had a visit from him. I was feeling very much harassed, and I had had a bad night. I guessed pretty well what my fate would be at the hands of the Company without any telling. Hall regarded me furtively, and fidgeted with his cap.

"Y'aint nabbed that chap yet?" he asked quite unnecessarily.

"No, my man," I answered curtly. I could see his small eyes were scanning



I stared

my face as if estimating my mental condition, and I felt annoyed. "Well, what is it?" I asked with asperity.

"Look 'ere, Governor," he said in a tense, hoarse whisper. "Would they let the bloke off if he give back the gold?"

"What?" I demanded, startled, and then recovering, stared at him. "No," I replied. "But what do you mean?"

He came back to himself, as it were, with a smirk. "All right sir; I'll get you the swag. It can't be helped."

When I got at his meaning—which amazed me, I went out and found Grimes. He, I and a quartermaster accompanied "Jackal" below. By his instructions, the aft hatchway was opened, and we descended into the hold. It was the scene of "Jackal's" discovery that lay before us. The little man had said nothing since we had left my cabin, and now he pointed at a loose, ramshackle, gaping trunk upon the floor.

"That's it, Governor," he said in a colorless voice.

The quartermaster ejaculated:

"It's the old trunk he hid in, Sir. Blest if it aint his trunk."

Grimes was stooping and opening it. There was a serious look on "Jackal's" face.

"My—" said Grimes. "It's the bars."

We all looked at Hall. The usual foolish grin was overspreading his face, tinged with sickliness.

"What the devil's this, Hall?" I asked.

"Aint they all there?" he asked, grinning still.

"Well, I'm damned if I ever thought it was a worm like this did it," said Grimes in frank bewilderment. The grin was still on "Jackal's" face, a little sheepish now. I was looking at him. "Reckon we'd better make sure of him," went on Grimes. "Though why the devil he went back on his game I don't know."

"It wasn't this man," I said abruptly.

"Jackal's" grin was sickly. The quartermaster had a heavy hand on his shoulder.

Suddenly a voice broke in upon the temporary silence, harsh and violent.

"Damn you, so it's you, you treacherous little reptile, whom we've got to

thank—"The speaker looked about as he finished his sentence, and stopped abruptly when he saw. He looked from one to another. It was Clarkson, A. B., who had appeared upon the scene. "Jackal" spoke at last.

"Garn, ol' man," he said reproachfully. "I wasn't going to give you away. You done it now." Clarkson laughed shortly, and kicked at a bag.

"How much do you know?" he asked, looking at me.

I did not reply at once, but seizing the lantern from Grimes, bent over the piles of luggage. Some of the passengers' trunks were open, and showed their contents.

"I guess we've got both of you," I said, addressing Clarkson as I straightened myself.

"It's a fair pinch," he acknowledged.

Little "Jackal's" beady eyes glanced from one to the other of us; his quick Cockney wits took in the situation.

"I wouldn't 'ave kep' silence if it 'ad only bin 'er," he said. "I seen the pearls in the bag that day I fell orf the yard. And I seen the ring marks in her neck when I spilt the soup over her. That's why I done it. She's a fair corf-drop. But I wish you 'adn't copped 'im."

"All right, old man," said Clarkson, with a careless laugh. "I reckon I was bound to founder some day."

It appeared afterwards that the pair, the man and the woman, had played this dangerous game for years, and had never been suspected. Clarkson was a capable sailor, and a man who deserved a better fate. It was believed that Miss Shepperson was his wife, but the fact was never definitely ascertained. She denied all knowledge of everything, blankly and with hysterical insistence, until Miss Agnew's pearls were found in her cabin, after which she collapsed. Clarkson it was who actually carried out the robbery of the bars, which were placed in Miss Shepperson's trunks, those trunks, she made such a play with. It was a neat notion, commanding the respect of an ingenious mind, and it was only frustrated by the sharp eyes and wits of "Jackal."



"Ice-balls for sale! Ice-balls for sale!"

## A Coolness Between Them

BY FANNY KEMBLE JOHNSON

Author of "The Park Story," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANKLIN BOOTH

**I**CE-BALLS for sale! Ice-balls for sale! Home-made flavors, biggest glasses in town! Ice-balls, balls, balls!"

Ten-year-old Georgy stopped, not from exhaustion, but to call back through the long, draughty passage between the houses to his mother at her kitchen window—"I say, Ma, fix me up a lot of that strawb'ry sirup, will you? The boys like it the best."

Mrs. Patrick leaned out above her shelf of jelly glasses, each an immense ruby in the morning light. Her plump, capable hands rested firmly on the sill. The sun shone affectionately on the pleasant sight of her face.

"I guess you'll have to wait till I make my jam this afternoon, Georgy."

She glanced over the fence. Her right hand neighbor and friend who had been standing in the next yard was now retreating, her slim shoulders held with angry straightness, the back of her blonde head expressive of indignant protest.

Mrs. Patrick's face twinkled into a comprehending smile. "I wouldn't be as fussy about my children as Anna Lloyd," her thought ran on as she carefully tested a glass of jelly. "They can't eat this, and they mustn't do that; no wonder everything makes them sick. And Anna is no worse than a dozen others 'round here."

From Mrs. Lloyd's kitchen window floated an insistent chorus: "Muvver, I want a penny."

"Mother, please give me a penny."

Then a grown-up voice, low and intense, "No, you can't have any pennies to-day."

"But Georgy Pat's selling ice-balls. I want an ice-ball."

Lower and intenser—"You are not going to have any ice-balls. It's no use to tease about them. You know they upset your stomach, Ben. You know they *always* give you a sore throat, Edy."

Over at her window Mrs. Pat chuckled, "If I had Anna's imagination." She held up another glass of jelly to the sun.

Across Mrs. Lloyd's right-hand back yard fence could be heard the little Rileys.

"Oh, goody, goody, it's ice-ball season."

"Div me a penny, Ma."

Then the baby, "Ma, Ma, penny."

Mrs. Riley, tiny, wisp-like, worried, showed a tired face at the door.

"If it isn't those old ice-balls again. There'll be no use dressing your children up this evening."

"Ma, here's four pennies. Can't I have two?"

"Timmy Riley, put my purse down this minute!"

"Div me—"

"Oh, my goodness, take them! Each of you take just one. No one can have two. And you can't have ice-balls after you are dressed, mind, no matter how many pennies your papa gives you."

Turning within she jerked up her forgotten iron. Its print showed plain in the middle of the baby's petticoat. She pushed back a dark straggling lock with a desperate gesture. Tears of vexation started to her eyes.

"Those ice-balls are a neighborhood nuisance," she declared with conviction, "that's just what they are."

"Ice-balls," sang Georgy Pat, his enthusiasm accumulating with his customers. "Step right up, ladies and gentlemen! Biggest ice-balls in town for a penny! Home-made flavors, strawb'ry, lemon, chocolut, and vanilla! Aw, Ma,

tell Barbie to come and shave ice for me," this last over his shoulder down the passage-way.

Out of Mrs. Lloyd's rose the chorus again.

"Muvver, Timmy Riley's got an ice-ball. Can't I have *one*?"

"Mother, please let me have just one. Just *one* wont give me a sore throat, will it?"

"Children," Anna Lloyd's voice pleaded tearfully, "if you'll just let those ice-balls alone, I'll take you down to Cablish's after dinner and buy you ten-cent strawberry ice-creams."

"May I wear my pink sash ribbons, Mother?"

"Yes, anything."

Edy succumbed to the vision of herself eating pink ice-cream, with her best pink sash ends sticking out on either side of her restaurant chair.

But Ben was not a sissy. "I'd rather have ten ice-balls," he contended gloomily.

Mrs. Pat laughed outright as she turned toward the pantry with her last glass of jelly.

"Well, I'd hate to take children as hard as that," said Mrs. Pat.

Tenth Street dressed itself up on warm evenings as if for a garden party. Then it unrolled red and green rugs down its doorsteps, and set green and red benches under its young maples, and part of it sat down and watched the rest of it promenading up and down.

The street was famous for the number of small children to a house front, and it was a sight worth seeing when pretty Mrs. Bradford marshaled her procession for the regulation evening visit to her mamma-in-law's on Fourteenth.

Five Bradford children there were, each so crisp and snowy that when she—they were all girls but the baby—plumped down on a rug or bench she looked like a hundred-leaved white rose with her plenteous petticoats frilling up, petal after petal, around a sash of sky blue or sunrise pink.

Consider the washing involved, please; think of the ironing; remember the sewing; and then marvel at Mrs. Bradford, all in white, too, tall, smooth-



browed, and smiling, modestly exhibiting this achievement once every week day and twice on Sundays.

She was conceded to set the pace. Mothers have moved from Tenth Street rather than suffer continual comparison with Mrs. Bradford.

But even Mrs. Bradford's serenity was ruffled as Georgy Pat's voice shrilled to her ears on the evening breeze.

"I'll never get Jack by," she sighed. Usually she bore her husband's boyishness with sweet toleration, but this evening she was nearly cross.

"Why, you wouldn't keep me from patronizing home industries, Julie," said Mr. Bradford, reproachfully. "Six of 'em, Georgy, and keep the change. Hullo, here's two more youngsters. What will you have, Edy? Send up your order, Ben. Get a hustle on yourselves."

"Mother—" began Edy primly. Ben glowered at her, and the red strawberry sirup glowed in the glass of thin shaved ice. Edy looked at her papa on the step. He was winking at Mr. Bradford over her innocent head. With a wary blue eye on the front door, Edy accepted an ice-ball. She lingered over it luxuriously, clasping the deliciously cold glass as long as possible while she shivered in the delightful draught whistling up between the two houses.

Ben gulped his. "Want another?"



"It was those old ice-balls" sobbed Mrs. Pat

asked his papa. "Eight more, Georgy." Over his shoulder he could hear Anna humming as she piled up her pretty hair three rooms away.

His attention was recalled by an anguished exclamation from Julie Bradford.

"There, now, I'll have that child to dress over again, Jack. You *would* give her the glass."

"Pooh, that's nothing; I'll soon fix that." He mopped at three-year-old Nina disastrously.

"Oh, do give her here," cried Mrs.



Bradford. She looked up to meet Anna Lloyd's sympathetic presence advancing through the evening gloom of her sitting-room.

"Isn't it perfectly *awful*?" murmured Anna in a tragic undertone as she bent forward over her husband's lounging shoulders. "Why Edith Allison Lloyd!" Ignoring Mrs. Bradford's glare of speechless agreement, she ran out, picked Edy up bodily, and deposited her on the Lloyd door-step.

"Georgy," she said in a trembling voice, "*please* don't sell Edy any more ice-balls. She has a cold now."

"I didn't sell *her* any," disclaimed Georgy Pat, "I sold 'em to Mr. Lloyd."

"Well, don't sell Mr. Lloyd any more," said Anna in what might pass for a despairing sort of jest.

"All right," agreed Georgy Pat. He leaned out over his stand, a soap-box set up in the passage entrance, to give Mr. Lloyd a reassuring grin.

"I guess we can have a couple ourselves, Jack," said Mr. Lloyd. "Some more of that strawberry, Georgy Pat, and keep the change. Oh, here's baby Riley. Give baby Riley a good one, Georgy."

Three rooms back he could hear Anna's voice, low and intense:

"I didn't expect any better of Ben, but I *am* surprised at you, Edith. No, I sha'n't take you to Cablish's. I don't care if Mr. Bradford *did* treat you. People have no business treating other people's children. How do they know what their parents allow them to have? Yes, I know your *father* bought them for you. I know all about your *father*. You come here and take these pellets. Now, go spray your throat. I should think you'd like to stay well, Edy,"—her voice grew plaintive—"I just know you'll be feverish to-night. Your hands are perfectly numb handling those cold glasses. Stand still while I pull out your sash-bow. No, I'm not going to take you to Cablish's. If you ask your father to take you, I'll bring you right in and put you to bed. Go *up* street and play. Don't let me catch you in front of that draughty passage again."

Over in her bedroom opposite, Mrs.

Pat, pinning up firm, dark-red coils of hair, made a little humorous face all to herself in the glass. "Poor babies!" she said, going out to sit on her front step. Before settling down she peeked around the house corner at Barbie, up to her pink elbows in ice, her splendid red curls streaming in the wind, her thin dress flapping and wet here and there as the drip caught it; at Georgy, redly perspiring in his efforts to keep track of spoons, glasses, pennies, and customers.

"Bless their hearts, they are having a good time!" she laughed to Mr. Bradford, who still waited with the baby and Lottie and Myra and Dorothy; and to Mr. Lloyd, who still hearkened dreamily to Anna's monologue within.

The two responded eagerly and agreeably. They were sunning themselves in her pleasantness when Mrs. Bradford came soberly down the street leading Nina, freshly frocked and admonished. Her smile of greeting to Mrs. Pat was slightly constrained, and she failed to linger for her usual chat before proceeding to her mamma-in-law's.

As the Bradfords vanished Anna Lloyd appeared, preening her white draperies with small dove-like flutters. She seemed not to see Mrs. Pat at first, but kept her pretty head and flushed face persistently turned to Mr. Lloyd. Mrs. Pat did not notice. She rattled away to this and that passing neighbor until, children's dresses being the subject, she turned with unfeigned unconsciousness.

"Oh, Anna, may I have that dear little Empire pattern of Edy's for Mrs. Hoffmeyer, here?"

"Why, certainly," said Anna with the utmost politeness and as little coldness as possible. "I'll go get it for you." This she did, joining them while she explained to Mrs. Hoffmeyer the peculiarities of that particular brand of pattern, especially about the sizes running so small. She even professed a solicitous interest in the success of Mrs. Pat's jelly before returning to her own step, where she sat rather silent, her eyes straying expectantly to Edy.

About nine Edy climbed up in Mrs. Lloyd's lap.

"I'm shivery," said Edy, as if it were a thing to be proud of.

Mrs. Lloyd kissed her forehead. But she knew before she did so exactly how hot it would be. She rose, casting at her husband a glance of reproach which the darkness made ineffective.

"Don't go in yet." He caught her hand to draw her back to his side.

"Edith is feverish. I'm going to put her to bed." Her tone expressed the bitterness dignity forbade her to put into words.

"No wonder she's feverish, hot as it is to-night." Lloyd pushed his damp hair back from his temples. "Why, I'm feverish myself."

"Not going in, Anna?" called Mrs. Pat, "better come over and visit me a while."

"Edith doesn't seem at all well," said Anna as politely as ever. "I think I had best take her in now. Good-night."

"Ice-balls," sang Georgy, "balls, balls, balls!" His impish voice maddened Anna as she undressed Edy and dosed her and sprayed her and sponged her into drowsiness.

Lloyd uneasily followed them before long, and stood feeling of Edy's brow. "She isn't much hot."

"I've just sponged her off." Anna's voice was that of Patience. "And listen how she's breathing."

"It's just her little nose."

"No, it's in the bronchial tubes."

"Do you want me to do anything, honey?"

"I think she'd better have something for her chest."

"I'll run down to the drug-store."

"And I wish you'd send Ben in to bed, Will."

Lloyd kissed her contritely. "Now, don't worry, Anna. You know she's always having these little spells."

"There wasn't a bit of sense in her having this one, Will," her voice faltered, she dropped her head on his arm; "I'm miserable about her all the time, her throat is so delicate. I don't think Sue ought to let Georgy sell those things. I'm sure I'd give him five dollars *not* to."

Her voice rose a trifle, quite enough

to reach Mrs. Pat, just in the act of stepping in the front door to bring Edy a glass of jelly. A flush rose to the firm cheek under the dark-red coils of hair. She turned back to her doorstep and later sent the jelly by Mr. Lloyd as he passed on his way from the drug-store.

At two in the morning Anna was still hanging over Edy, clasping her burning little hands with passionate pressures, and the worst was going to happen.

Edy recovered and ate the jelly. Georgy Pat continued to sell ice-balls at erratic intervals. And the coolness between No. 15 and No. 17 perceptibly increased.

"If Anna Lloyd chooses to be as foolish as all that," said Mrs. Pat to her husband, "she'll just have to be. I really don't see why I should suppress my children because she can't manage hers."

"I don't see how I can be expected to feel any other way about it," declared Anna to her husband. "If Sue is so unreasonable as to be offended because I object to having my children made ill, I can't help it."

By August the two, once so intimate, had nearly ceased having occasion to speak to each other at all. Anna sat through the languid evenings with delicate averted head; or strolled by, consciously engrossed in conversation with Will or the children.

But Mrs. Pat maintained a rich unembarrassment which allowed her to smile on Anna and call out good-natured nonsense to Edy and Ben, when occasion offered, and her husband and Anna's husband smoked together as companionably as ever on the benches beneath the maples.

When Georgy Pat could no longer exist without an ice-ball orgy, Anna removed the children from temptation by spending the evening in a near-by park, or by visiting some suburban cousins.

One morning after such a discreet flight she noticed an unnatural quiet pervading Mrs. Pat's back yard. Ben explained it at luncheon.

"Georgy's got a sore throat," he announced cheerfully.



"You're glad, Anna Lloyd, that a poor little kid has a sore throat"

Mr. Lloyd glanced at his wife. She blushed sensitively. "Why are you looking at me so, Will?"

"Because you're glad, Anna Lloyd; yes, *glad*, that a poor little red-headed kid has a sore throat."

"I'm not. I'm not glad that any child is sick."

"No, you're only glad that Georgy Pat's mamma has a little boy with a sore throat. Well, maybe you can see a difference. These fine distinctions are beyond me."

"I don't think you should say such things before your children, Will."

"I don't see how you can think such things in the presence of your children, Anna."

Anna rose with a mien successfully combining dignity and exasperation. She explored a sideboard and brought out a glass of jelly.

"When you are through, Edy," she said, "you may carry this to Georgy, and ask how he is feeling."

Mr. Lloyd went out grinning. He glanced at Georgy's deserted and pa-

thetic stand, and vanished, still grinning, in the maw of Down Town.

The silence in Mrs. Pat's back yard deepened. It grew oppressive. Ben explained it at dinner a few days later.

"Georgy Pat's taking the measles."

After her first leaping throb of thankfulness that Edy and Ben had had them, Anna felt a pang.

"But I've heard they are very mild this year." She spoke involuntarily.

Lloyd threw back his head with a laugh. "So you were?"

"I was not," she flashed back.

"You were. Your conscience is hurting you right now."

"It's not. I'm just sorry the child's sick. I'm sorry to hear that any one's child has anything. Certainly, I'm not heartless enough to laugh when I do hear it."

The silence in Mrs. Pat's back-yard thickened. It hung like a pall of hot, yellow sunshine. Looking out of an upper window a week later, Anna saw Georgy's old ragged football lying lifelessly under a dusty vine. Unexpectedly,

inexplicably, tears sprang to her eyes.

"How is Georgy?" she asked later of Ben who came rushing in, a glorious incarnation of crimson-cheeked health and hunger.

"He's got a compilation," said Ben. "Muvver, leave me have some maple sirup and bread."

"Don't *ever* say 'leave,'" corrected Anna mechanically. She thought a moment.

"Who told you that, Bennie?"

"Ferne Rowler."

She caught Ben to her passionately and lavished apparently reasonless kisses on his tousled head.

"Mother will come right down and get you something," she promised vehemently, as if some one had said that she shouldn't. It was almost noon, but she did not call his attention to this as she might have done the day before, or suggest that he had as well wait the quarter-of-an-hour till luncheon. All the time she was taking all sorts of needless trouble for him she was seeing Georgy Pat's old ball lying there so quiet under the neglected vines.

When the others came in she questioned them at once.

"Barbie says Georgy's real sick, mother," said Edy. "Can I put on a new dress this evening?"

"I sha'n't have one finished," answered Mrs. Lloyd coldly. "Have you heard anything, Will?"

"The little chap developed pneumonia a few days ago, Anna. Patrick's worried to death." Lloyd was looking serious. "I walked home with him, just now. You see the boy had a cold to begin with. The doctor thinks that worked the mischief; he didn't start fair."

Anna caught at a chair back as if she feared to fall. Quite suddenly and sickeningly she had a clear vision of Georgy Pat lying still in the dark upper room, only stiller, oh, so much stiller than his useless ball, stiller than anything in the whole, summer world.

"Anna!" cried Lloyd.

"I'm all right," she said, "only—I'm going over, Will. I'm going *now*."

"Of course you are," agreed Lloyd. His kind, brown eyes shone down on her

comprehendingly. He took her to Mrs. Pat's front-door, kissed her, and shut it on her.

At first the silence filling the long hall terrified her. Then a fretful moan wavered down the steps between the bedroom walls. She passed it shrinkingly, and tapped at a half-closed door. Mrs. Pat opened it. She had been crying. She looked vaguely at her visitor; then a wave of recognition swept her into Anna's eager arms.

"It was those old ice-balls!" sobbed Mrs. Pat.

"Will," confessed Anna in the solemn watches of the night, "if anything *should* happen to Georgy—" her voice broke. "Oh, I *was* glad. I never thought of his really being ill. I just thought, 'Now Sue will see how it is herself.' It's a judgment!"

"Nonsense," said Lloyd, jeering at her comfortingly, "you don't imagine Providence is going to kill off Georgy Pat just to get even with you, I hope. You must think you're an important item of the Universe."

But measles, even when ably assisted by pneumonia, could not put a dynamic bundle of life like Georgy out of business. In three weeks he was lovingly kicking the old ball around a back-yard filled with twenty dancing, howling boys. From her sewing-room window Anna watched him, happily. For obvious reasons it was even a more beautiful sight to her than it was to Mrs. Pat at her kitchen window.

Presently Georgy tired of kicking the ball, and sought another outlet of energy.

"Ma," he called, "aw, Ma; can I sell ice-balls this evening?"

Mrs. Pat came quite out into the yard to emphasize her reply.

"George Patrick," she said, for all the neighborhood to hear if it were listening, "don't you ever dare to say ice-ball to me again as long as you live!"

Just then she glanced up and caught Anna's eye. They laughed together. Intimate laughter it was at first, coming close upon past tears shed in each other's arms.

"Aw, I don't see anything to laugh about," growled Georgy Pat.





De Kerkrist lifted his cap. "Good-day," he said, evenly

## Regina

### The Story of An International Love Affair

BY EMERSON TAYLOR

Author of "The Home Port," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY EDMUND FREDERICK

(See Frontispiece)

OVER the pastures buried in snow to the top rail of the fences, through the silent woods, rejoicing in the pale sunshine and the wind, Regina held a trail for two fine hours straight across country, on her slender skees. She would fetch a wide circle home again, when the sun sloped down to the tops of the bris-

tled hemlocks. Two hours of sheer delight; and then she decided to zig-zag up the steep slope of Little Smith Hill, just for the sake of the hazardous down rush—when the skees take themselves wings, and the crisp snow whirls up behind in a frosty, feathery wake. Did she not tell her apprehensive Aunt Amy that



she was going that day in quest of adventures? There was something too in the lonely quiet of the bare countryside which might help, Regina told herself, when she tried to settle the troubling thoughts the last two days had brought her—thoughts so very important, when one is twenty-two, and rich, and very beautiful.

"What if he *should*—" Regina asked the wind on the summit of the hill. Such a splendid man, this Henri de Kerkrist, whom brother Tom had brought up with him to the house. Military attaché at the embassy, as simple and modest as he was highly born and highly placed, with sisters who were duchesses—she had meant every word when she told him at parting she hoped they would meet soon again. "He's so much better than the others," she told the friendly sunshine, with a smile; then she shook her head back, like one tossing off a burden. "Time enough!" she added. "Steady now—!" For the wind drove at her gustily. "Now then—!"

Carefully she adjusted the harness on her right foot, for one must be careful in the face of a half mile slide over glistening crust. She glided to the edge; with just a touch of her tough ash pole, she straightened for the descent. No thought of anything now but a clear course and a level landing! A laugh leaped from her as the trees rushed past. Faster—faster still! She was breathless and giddy. Faster—and in a flash she saw that below her the hill dropped short off over a ledge. No time to stop or turn! Lips firm, eyes ablaze, she gathered herself for the leap. She crouched, she sprang forward, over and down the little cliff, swift and straight as an arrow. But just under the smooth snow at the foot was hidden a slippery, treacherous log—and for a long, long time Regina, who had gone forth to seek adventures, lay below the ledge like a hurt rabbit, with a pain in her ankle that stabbed and burned.

"I can't!" she gasped, when at length she struggled to her feet, chilled and stiff. A long quarter of a mile away, down a lane, was an old white house. "I *will*!" exclaimed the girl, shutting her

white teeth, and a foot at a time, dragging herself along by the fences, she crept across the snow. She had just strength enough to lift the polished brass knocker on the front door; for, as the door opened, the whole of the snowy world swam dizzily away, and he who appeared from the house was just in time to catch her as she reeled and fell.

"You!" he whispered sharply, wonderingly. "Regina—!"

But she did not hear him. As he raised her up, her little head drooped back against his shoulder. She sighed like one asleep, as he carried her gently into the house.

She awoke in a kind of a daze. Before her, a glowing fire was roaring a welcome. Around her, instead of the grim and snowy countryside, with its blue shadows and shivery wind, was the comfort of a room where the rugs were perfect, the furniture venerable mahogany, where sober looking books abounded, and three perfect pictures smiled down from the walls. And if these wonders were not enough to furnish forth a very real adventure, Regina's waking eyes met those of a young, clean-cut, outdoor-looking man, who was standing by the fireplace with a little glass of something in his hand.

"Drink this," he ordered quietly, yet with an undoubted authority. "You'll be all right now." And as Regina handed back the glass with a little shudder—"What happened?" asked the stranger, in the most queerly casual fashion. "Get a fall?"

She told him briefly of her accident, trying to make very light of it. "And to end it all, I fainted, or did something equally silly," she apologized. "Er—how did I get in here?" inquired Regina, looking down.

"Oh, I helped—a little," he replied, with a note in his voice she did not quite understand. "And now," he added, "if you're feeling steadier, I'll see what I can do for the injured ankle."

"You—?" she faltered.

"Oh, I'm a doctor," he smiled. "My name's Oliver, if you'll let me introduce myself."

A long story of Tom's about some

classmate who had buried himself in the country near Shipley with a wild idea of helping the people on the lonely hill farms, came back to her vaguely. How thoroughly Tom had bored her with his praise of his most uninteresting friend, and of the man's stupid book! "Steven Oliver?" asked Regina.

"Exactly," he nodded. "And you—"

"I am Miss Cameron," she told him negligently.

But the man shook his head.

"What—?"

"No," he said positively, yet with a hint of a whimsical smile, "you're simply a patient come to me with a damaged ankle. It isn't the time for you to be Regina Cameron," he insisted. "You're a patient." And with the air of one who is determined to live up to a difficult resolution, he stooped down and deftly drew off her deerskin moccasin before Regina could say a word. "Still, please! I want to see what the matter is."

He was rude to her—rude! She never had had such an experience in all her life. He treated her like a common accident case. Didn't he know what it meant to have Regina Cameron, Donald Cameron's daughter, the richest girl in New England, in his care? Compare him with the considerate, tactful, perfect *Vicomte de Kerkrist*, for instance. *There* was a man who understood a girl's real value. But as for this Oliver—"Why, he doesn't care a bit who I am!" she said, trembling with indignation.

"Just a second!" he cautioned patiently. She watched him, as he bent there before her. How wonderfully light and skillful was his touch; how extraordinary to find a man of his evident tastes and education—whatever his manners—buried here in Shipley! What on earth could an intelligent being find to do the year round in a place like this? How did it happen that a man so extremely handsome, with such an air of breeding—

"Ahem!" said Regina, for no reason at all.

"Only a sprain," he reported promptly, and rose to his feet in one supple movement. "We'll get a bandage on it right away. And then, as soon as you've had a cup of tea—"

"Thank you very much," interrupted Regina promptly, seizing her opportunity, "but I really don't care for any."

She scored. She saw him wince a little.

"Then I'll get out the wood sled immediately," he went on a second later, as though nothing had happened. "It's not luxurious, but it's the only team that would stand the ghost of a show in the drifts above here."

"That will be very nice," said Regina primly. "I'm so anxious to get home."

If he chose to treat her thus oddly, keeping her at arm's length, as it were, without showing what must be for him a really tremendous experience, she could certainly do likewise. And she planned a little stroke, which, if properly delivered, would finish the affair very neatly.

"But *why*—?" she kept asking herself, after Oliver had left the room. "Why should he act so queerly toward me? I—I'm nothing in the world to this man—just an uninteresting case!"

And at that moment Regina met with a most remarkable surprise.

Lying on the table beside her was the illustrated supplement of a New York Sunday paper six weeks old. A page of it had amused her a little at the time, with its photographs of the girls who had posed in the "Pictures from Old English Masters" for a fashionable charity. Her own was among them, as one of Raeburn's ladies. Once more she opened the paper, a bit disdainfully. But when she came to the page of photographs, it was only to find that hers had been carefully cut out.

"I'm very sorry to keep you waiting," said Oliver from the doorway behind her. "That's a very old paper," he added slowly, coming forward.

"It's not even complete," said Regina deliberately—why, she could not tell.

"No." He hesitated, then resumed in a rush: "The most interesting part—has been taken out."

She made no comment at all, coolly stroking the head of the silky cocker spaniel who had settled confidently beside her. When Oliver spoke again, it was as though he addressed some confidant in the heart of the fire. The big room was very still.



"Drink this," he ordered quietly. "You'll be all right now"

"Four years ago," he said, "I watched a girl at her coming-out party. I was a friend of her brother's. And from that hour I carried away a very definite impression. The girl was both intelligent and warm hearted."

If Regina heard him, she made no sign.

"Now I come across the same girl's photograph—when she's four years older. The picture was immensely eloquent."

"Kind in you to feel an interest," she murmured, her lips almost white. And something, perhaps the man's irritating silence, made her ask him—"Might one know—what the picture had to say?"

He looked over at her gravely. "It said 'Behold a girl who's willing to go through life, in spite of herself perhaps, as merely a beautiful ornament.' Think of it—!" cried Oliver suddenly, driving his right fist into the palm of his other hand like a hammer. "Isn't that a shame?"

"It's not true!" she answered.

"No—? I suppose the trouble is that—"

"Well?" Oh, how angry she was!

"The girl's never had a chance really to live since the day she was born," said Oliver.

"How do you know that?"

"How do I know—? Why, I started in exactly the same way myself. And then—and then I broke out!" he said, with a sudden, rough impetuosity. "Out of prison—into the air! Is your foot feeling any easier?" he asked in the next breath. "For if so—"

"Much better!" gasped Regina.

"Then we'll be going."

"With pleasure, Dr. Oliver!" she told him, very emphatically.

The wood sled yawed over the drifts like a ship in a seaway. They made a long trip of it up to the great house on the hill, Oliver standing in front, Regina sitting amidships on a box, wrapped in a heavy blanket, rage in her heart. And when they arrived under the *porte-cochère*, it was with glee that she fired her cherished final shot at the man who had chosen to treat her like an ordinary pa-

tient before scolding her for having a good time in her own way. If he had behaved himself, she might have been very nice to him. And the thought gave delicious point to the words, when she said:

"I want to pay you, please, doctor!"

She handed him stiffly the two dollar bill she had found, by great good luck, stuffed down in an inner pocket.

"Thank you," said Oliver quietly, taking the money. "And now," he added, with just a glance at the gaping man servant who had opened the door, "if you'll put your arms about my neck, I'll carry you into the house."

"What—?" But as she sprang to her feet, she winced with pain.

"You see you can't possibly walk," observed Oliver suavely. "Ready, please."

She leaned forward. A vivid scarlet flooded her cheeks and brow. But when he had brought her indoors and set her on a chair, a little smile flickered round the corners of her tender mouth.

"I deserved it!" whispered Regina.

"And I wonder if you'll ever know the reason for it all," was the man's astonishing reply, as he moved away to the door. "Good-by."

"Good-night," said Regina.

"Did he seem at all a—a refined person?" asked Aunt Amy, who was terribly upset by the whole incident. She felt that somehow she had been remiss in her care of this beautiful, motherless niece of hers, whose mutinous eyes, as she dreamed that evening before the fire, seemed full of troubling thoughts.

"The more I think of him, the more remarkable he appears—in several ways," the girl answered.

"Why think of him at all?" Miss Cameron the elder asked acidly.

"I wonder!" smiled Regina from her pillows. But when Tom returned, a few days later, he found he had to tell again the story of his classmate with the queer ideas of responsibility. "Get me his book, will you?" asked his sister idly. "I haven't a thing to read."

"You won't have time for much of any reading the next six months," her brother laughed back at her teasingly. "Not



if things go as I hope they will. By the way, I saw Henri off to Washington all right."

"That's good," responded Regina, looking out the window, down the snowy valley.

Once more she climbed to the top of Little Smith Hill—on a day in April, when the air was full of the scent of freshly turned earth, when the wind was from the south. Far below her, an old white house was almost hidden behind the crimsoning leafage of the sugar maples. A great deal had happened in the past few weeks—she was weary with the thoughts that came to her, golden with promise, some of them, and some of them dark-hued. They pressed upon her in a crowd, as she stood there on the hill-top, her mutinous, somber eyes on the white house far below her.

"Good-by, friend unbeliever!" called Regina down the lazy wind.

And then, with a sigh, she turned towards home again—the great house which in a few days now—so very few—she would be leaving for a long, long time. Such a brilliant match, this one of the heiress with the noble soldier of France! Her friends were all *so* happy in it. Such a splendid man, De Kerkrist!

A glance at the watch strapped to her wrist made her hurry. A dozen times that afternoon she had reminded herself that she must be home in time, for Henri was coming on the five o'clock train—his last visit till he should return to take her away with him forever.

"Good-by!" she whispered to the sweet spring countryside.

At a turn in the deserted back road, Regina came upon a white horse and buggy hitched to a gate post. And hardly had she noticed it, when out of the house—a tidy little place, though evidently very poor—a man came on the run. With furious haste he untied the horse; he was just on the point of climbing into the carriage, when he looked up and saw her standing in the road.

"You—!" he cried swiftly.

"What is it?" asked Regina, coming up to him, for Oliver's face was very white and stern.

"Trouble—big trouble. Two lives. Understand?"

"A—a woman?" she faltered.

"Just happened in by accident and found her. Now I'm going to telephone in to town for a nurse. Got to have help, if I can get it. Talk of emergencies!"

"How soon can a nurse get here?" asked Regina abruptly.

"To-morrow morning, probably."

"And in the mean time—?"

"Oh, single-handed," he answered promptly. "It won't be the first time. But it's hard not to let the patient have every possible chance."

"She *must* have every chance!" the girl cried passionately.

"What—?" And he drew back, staring at her with his jaw set grimly.

"Wait!" Regina commanded, as he turned away with a shake of the head. "Once you said I was content to go through life dressed up like a Raeburn portrait. Remember?"

"Well?" He paused, with one foot on the step of the buggy. The girl made no answer; but a tragic expectation, a steady determination burned in her beautiful eyes. Her hands were clenched tight. From far down the valley came the whistle of the train from the city, bringing the Vicomte. A moment's tense silence, then Oliver's face changed. A tremendous surprise, a dawning hope lightened it beautifully. "If I only dared!" he muttered. "If I only dared hope so much!"

Still she was silent.

He took a step nearer. He caught both her hands in his unresistingly.

"There's a very sick woman in that house," he said, then gripped her hands tighter. "Will *you* help me?" he asked, his voice shaking like a leaf.

She raised her head, as though answering a challenge. "Give me a chance," she answered. "That's all."

"Come then!" And without another word, he led the way round the little house.

They passed into the kitchen, where a lean, yellow cat leaped up on the window sill, glaring at them. The stove was cold. On the table stood two saucers, with traces of food drying in them.



"Where is she?" whispered Regina.

He laid his hand on a door knob, listened, then nodded to her to follow him. On the bed in an adjoining room, a dark and airless place, lay a woman, her white, pinched face and tumbled black hair showing above the quilt and coarse sheet. She moved her head constantly, wearily, from side to side. Her eyes were closed; her voice was very tired. She was singing to the tiny bundle that lay in the fold of her arm. She was younger than Regina.

"Some time this morning," said Oliver softly. "Husband's off on a wood cutting job in Ashland."

For a moment Regina covered her eyes. A shiver of pain ran over her. "Will—will she live?" she asked.

"We'll make her live," the man replied, leading the way back to the kitchen. "*We'll* save her! Now pay the strictest attention to everything I tell you. And *do* it. Understand?"

Even as he spoke, she had her hat off and was rolling back the sleeves of her waist over the round, white arms. And then, for an hour she plunged into strange and pitiful tasks, her eyes alight.

Darkness came, and Oliver thought he might venture to leave the case for some urgently needed supplies.

"Will you telephone to my house why I didn't come home?" Regina asked him. "They"—and just for a second she hesitated a little—"they were expecting me."

"Sure you don't mind staying alone here a little while?" he asked in return.

"Take your time," she answered, with a brave and flashing smile. "I'm going to dress the baby."

Not till noon the next day did she surrender her post of duty. All night long she fought with Oliver as well as she could for the life of the girl and the tiny new-comer. All night long, sleeplessly, at grips with life at its crudest and barest, when the pleasant world outside the house in the woods, her world, seemed very far away. Hour after hour she wondered blindly at this quiet man's tenderness, his cheer, his resourcefulness in danger. A man, this doctor!—was he content with her? Did he believe at last, after seeing her do what she did last

night, that Regina was something more than the idle girl in the photographs? What would he say to her, when they had finished? And suddenly, with stunning force, the new thought came to her—why had she wished to please him at all?

They sat together in the warm sun, on the stone steps outside the kitchen door. A great weariness descended on Regina like a weight; the sunshine was pain. She laid her face in her hands, very quietly.

"Here come your people, I guess," said Oliver, knocking out his pipe. "Now I expect I'll have to do some explaining."

She sprang up quickly. "No!" cried Regina. "I stayed—because I wanted to. *You* had nothing to do with it."

From the motor which halted by the roadside came forward a hardy, soldierly figure, whose keen, cool glance seemed to embrace every detail of the scene—Regina's weary eyes, the poverty-stricken surroundings, Oliver's height and width of shoulder.

"Good-morning," he said easily. "You have been most brave and devoted, *mademoiselle*."

"Miss Cameron is indeed brave," Oliver replied. "I'm proud of her."

"Truly?" she breathed, her lips barely moving.

"I too," smiled the Vicomte. "But—but why did you do this, *mademoiselle*?"

And Regina made no answer. Her eyes met Oliver's; she lowered her head. Once more a slow and burning blush crept over her delicate cheek and brow.

"Ahem!" murmured De Kerkrist, looking away.

"I don't believe you'll ever forget last night," said Oliver slowly. "Nor will I ever forget it. Last night was when I met Regina Cameron."

"Believe that—will you?" asked the girl impetuously.

For answer Oliver took from his pocket-book a newspaper photograph, rubbed and creased as though it had been unfolded many times. He tore it into twenty pieces, which the wind blew down the dusty road.

"Are you ready?" asked De Kerkrist.

"Are you?" demanded Oliver.

"Why, yes—of course!" she said to the Vicomte, a trace of apprehension in her voice.

"So it's good-by?"

"Yes," said Regina. And she added, as if that explained it all, "You see, I'm going to be married."

"To me," put in De Kerkrist, looking up from a study of the palm of his hand.

"What—?" The curt, rough exclamation struck down like the blow of a club. "Well, I don't accept it."

"Really!" De Kerkrist smiled most tolerantly, used to all kinds of men and manners.

"Listen to me!" said Oliver, very low and smoothly. "Where are you going to be happy *now*? Now you know where to find the best life has to offer—service—being useful. Useful to the people you belong with. You didn't know this, when this gentleman came to you—and you said 'Yes' to him. But you know it for true now, Regina Cameron. I tell you, you were happy here last night—happier than you ever were before in all your life."

Such a patient smile as the good Vicomte wore!

"*Monsieur* is partisan," he commented. "Might I almost venture to say—*mon-sieur* is personal?"

"Yes!" cried Oliver quickly. "Yes, I can say that to you now. We're on the same ground—you and I, Regina!"

"No, no!" she whispered, drawing back.

"It's true!" he went on, swift and strong as a mountain torrent. "I've loved you from the beginning—from four years ago, d'you hear me? Love—but I



Somehow Oliver helped her up the steps of the car

couldn't say so. Not to the girl in the photograph."

She looked at him wide-eyed. "Was that why—you said I was only a patient—that time?"

"Yes. But now—!"

"No, no!" she cried again. "Let me go. Come, Henri, please." And swiftly she ran across the rough grass plot before the house to where the car was waiting.

De Kerkrist lifted his cap. "Good-day," he said evenly, unperturbed.

A week later, early in the day, Oliver came out of his house and turned the key. He carried a traveling bag, and halted at the gate to give the woman who followed him some instructions.

"Too bad you're goin' outer town jest the day before the weddin'," she observed sympathetically. "Quite a sight, I guess."

"Quite," he agreed. "Good-by." And with that, he turned on his heel and set out along the steep, straight road leading from his house up and down into Shipley village. At the top of the first hill he stopped a moment, and looked back unconsciously. He stood rooted fast, in the strangest surprise, for he saw a woman hurry up to his gate, fling it open, and go to the door. "Somebody to see Mrs. Carter," he sensibly concluded, then took up his way to Shipley and the railroad station beyond.

His ticket bought, he listened while the station agent volubly explained the woes of handling all the baggage and express for weddings like Miss Cameron's to the Vicomte; and when he could, he strolled away to the end of the platform where the parlor car on this train usually stopped. He was looking up the track, waiting for a black engine to come shouldering round the curve in the cut, when a rustle of skirts and a light, hurried step sounded close behind him.

She was as white as paper; the dust of the yellow road had powdered her. But her grey-violet eyes were blazing.

"I—I tried to catch you. I've been

running," she stammered, setting down the light bag she carried.

"What for?" was all that Oliver could say. "Is there anything—"

"Yes!" she told him. "I—"

Then the train drew in, with a roar. People looked down at the couple from the windows with vague and smiling curiosity.

"Take yo' bag, sir?" inquired the black porter briskly of Oliver.

"Take this too," said Regina.

Somehow Oliver helped her up the narrow steps of the car; the train started.

"But—but what does it all mean?" he asked blindly, standing beside her in the cindery vestibule. "To-morrow's your wedding."

"To-day," she corrected softly.

"You—you're running away?"

"Not exactly."

"Then—where *are* you going?"

"I'm going," said Regina slowly, tremulously, her small, slim hands pressed tight together, "to where I can *live*."

"Regina—!"

"If—if you will show me how," she added, with a quiver of her tender, lovely lips.

Glancing out the car door a moment later, the brakeman retired discreetly. "Another one o' them bridal couples," he sighed to the porter.

"—from the very first minute I saw you," she was saying to the man who held her against his heart.

## The Correspondents' Conspiracy

BY ALBERT EDWARDS AND GEORGE E. HOLT

ILLUSTRATED BY E. ROSCOE SHRADER

**I**T was a meeting of The Tangier Kipling Club. Forman threw down the book with a bang which rattled the glasses and upset the soda-bottle. He had come to the end of the Ballad and needed no text for the refrain.

"Altogether," he said. The five men roared out in unison:

For East is East and West is West and  
never the twain shall meet  
Till East and West together stand at  
God's great judgment seat.

But there is neither East nor West,  
border nor breed nor birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face  
though they come from the ends of the  
Earth.

They had gathered in Chance's rooms at the Hotel Sevilla for a special session, to celebrate the arrival of Sinclair. From the utter wilds of The South Country he had come back to the semi-civilization of Tangier. He was the oldest of the five men, the founder of the club. He had an Oxford degree, was a philosopher, poet and student. He was one of the three Europeans who knew the Shilhah tongue of The Great Atlas. He had invented an alphabet for this hitherto unwritten language. For twenty years he had been the Morocco correspondent of The Westminster Gazette. And there is a great English diplomat who owes all he is to Sinclair.

Years ago this great man, then a youngster just beginning his career, was stationed at Tangier. He made a stupid blunder. He forbade the religious dances of the Aiswâia sect. For an hour or more the situation was critical. The fanatical Anghera tribesmen left their plows in the furrows and gathered on the brown hills which pile up back of Tangier. It looked for a while as if the handful of Europeans would be massacred before the gunboats, racing across from Gibraltar, could arrive.

Sinclair rode out alone into the hills, and—God only knows how—held the Kabyles in check till he saw the nose of a British war-ship rounding the cape, into the harbor. Then he rode back—so hard that his horse dropped before the Legation gate. He found the young ambassador, out on the verandah, thanking Heaven that help had come in time.

"Good work, my boy, good work!" he said to Sinclair. "A soldier would get the V. C. for this. Now, we'll give the gunboats a chance. A few lydite shells—"

He did not finish, for he was looking down the barrel of Sinclair's revolver.

"Your excellency,"—Sinclair's voice is suave when he is in earnest—"I gave my word, that if they kept quiet there would be no trouble. They're dispersing now. Give them time! Afterwards you can

hang me. I don't care. But give them time! You understand, Your Excellency—I gave my word."

The tropical sun glinted off the muzzle of Sinclair's revolver. The Ambassador blinked his eyes. Then suddenly his ambassadorial dignity wilted.

At Sinclair's dictation a soldier wiggled a message out to the gunboat: "On no account open fire unless ordered."

"Now, Your Excellency," Sinclair said, "We'll go up on the roof and watch the tribesmen. When they are out of sight, I will surrender my revolver."

What happened between them, up there on the roof, nobody knows. Naturally His Excellency did not tell and Sinclair has never mentioned the affair. But one of the Moorish servants who guard the Legation saw and overheard what happened on the verandah. He gave it out to the mysterious Native News Agency, that wireless system by which word comes down from Fez eight hours before the government runners. And because all the Moors in Morocco know the story, Sinclair can travel anywhere in The Empire.

When Sinclair is not wiring his paper, or writing ethnological essays on The Berber Tribes, or controlling the fate of Europe over his revolver—he drinks, drinks "White Horse," the fluid which passes for whiskey in Tangier. On the label of the squat bottle is the coat of arms of Great Britain and the assurance that His Majesty drinks "White Horse." Although Sinclair consumes immense quantities of this liquid—from which God save The King—he not only has been, but is, a gentleman.

The other men were the same type, all of them, gamblers in what they called The Great Game. Even Blake, the youngest of them, could tell stories. He had followed the Russian army in Manchuria for Reuters. Chance had gone in to Pekin with the Allies. The biggest journalistic trick of the decade, newspaper men agreed. On his way home from the Orient, he had come over to Tangier from "Gib" and had stayed. Nobody knew why: he said he liked the country. But the lives of these men, as their apostle, Kipling, would say, are another story.



It was Sinclair's turn to contribute, but instead of reciting his favorite—"The Sestina of the Tramp Royal"—he took an extra strong spill out of the bottle of White Horse.

"I hate to break into this poetical debauch," he said, "but I'm not in the Kipling mood. You see I've just come from the inside where there isn't any news—"

"Where there's nothing but news," Blake interrupted.

"And I want to know what's been happening here in Tangier," Sinclair went on. "I'd like to know what the Club's judgment is on our Sultan Abdul-Aziz."

"A bloody rotter!" said Benton, emphatically. "Sold out absolutely. The worst traitor in history—handing his country over, tied and gagged, to France."

"Dope." So Blake expressed his judgment. "A fat-head; hasn't brains enough to be a big traitor. Gone dippy over the automobiles and grand pianos—the women and other toys the French are giving him. They are playing with him; pouring booze into him and getting ready to stick a knife into his back when he's drunk."

"I frame him up as a cynic," Forman said thoughtfully. "He isn't anybody's fool. He knows what he's up against. The smash-up of Morocco is written in The Book. He knows he can't stop it. The French have the drop on him. So he says, '*Après moi, le deluge*'—'A short life and a merry one for mine.' And meanwhile he salts away all the money he lays hands on in London banks. He isn't a fool."

"Chance?" Sinclair asked.

Chance lit his pipe before he answered.

"To me it doesn't seem to matter much whether Abdul-Aziz is a crook or a cynic. He's French! That's sure. He's Sultan of Morocco and belongs absolutely to Morocco's worst enemy. He's French—hang him!"

"Right you are," nodded Benton. "What worse can you say? He's French!" Sinclair jerked his chair nearer the table.

"Glad to hear you chaps talk like that. Draw up. Here's a scheme."

For five minutes he talked in the

smooth voice he had used years ago to his Ambassador in short, curt sentences—the style one uses when cabling at a dollar a word. Then he stopped abruptly and filled his glass. It was Blake, the youngster, who spoke first.

"It's a mean trick to play on the unsuspecting companies that insured our lives."

Nobody contradicted him. Then Chance got up from his chair slowly. He stared down at a fly struggling in the White Horse.

"It's the Great Game," he said. "Yes. Hanging on a stray bullet. What is written in The Book must be. But it's just the chance I've been looking for. I won't do much more in this incarnation that's worth while. This pleases me! As a civilized man, to enter my little protest against these damned French, who come down here lying and murdering—in the name of civilization! I'm on. Shake!" He grasped Sinclair's hand. "But with you other fellows it's different. You're younger, perhaps there are people who care."

"Oh!" Blake interrupted. "Cut it out. It suits me down to the ground."

"If you think you're going to keep us out of this, Chance," Forman put in, speaking for himself and Benton, "Well—guess again!"

"Right ho!" Sinclair said. "Hurrah for the Kipling Club! Let's drink a little toast; then Chance and I'll go over to see the old man."

When the glasses were filled they all turned to Sinclair. He was a man who took his toasts seriously. He handled his glass a moment thoughtfully.

"We're most of us old—and we're none of us good. But we love this 'Twilight Land.' We'll keep the French out while we live. To Morocco—and damn the French! Come on, Chance."

An old man, bald headed, with ferociously upturned mustaches, tapped his eye-glasses on his knee and pondered. The shaded light on his table fell full on the American and Englishman, Chance and Sinclair. His own face was in the shadow—for he was a wise old man.





They came to a wall and a heavily studded wooden gate

"Do you gentlemen realize"—his hard gray eyes glowed threateningly—"the gravity of the game you are playing? Do you realize that one ill-advised word might set all the armies of Europe in action? Your scheme might easily—but I suppose you do realize—you ought to. There are so many possibilities—serious possibilities."

"I can't foresee any possibility, Your Excellency," Chance interrupted, "which would not work out to the benefit of your country!"

"Humph!" the old man snorted, "I can." And then he went on in an irritated tone. "In the name of Heaven, what persuaded you to come to me with such an irresponsible scheme? You must know I could not bind my Sovereign to any such hair-brained proceeding."

"We didn't expect official endorsement, Your Excellency. We simply tell you what we're going to do. It will—I am sure—interest your government. They may instruct you to aid the movement. You know where you can find me. Good-night."

The two visitors rose.

"Wait," the old man said. "Sit down."

For three minutes or more he twirled his eye-glasses; then, his mind made up, he spoke with decision.

"I cannot encourage you. Nor can I prevent you. That is my official answer. Privately—I think you will admit I have always treated you gentlemen of the press courteously, given you what news I could. I will be glad if you keep me informed. Of course I cable my government everything of importance which happens here. What they will do when they hear of your scheme, I can only guess. Probably they will laugh. But there is just a chance that if you succeed in some of the smaller towns—Al K'sar or Tetuan for instance—they might regard the matter more seriously. You are acting on your own responsibility; I can give you no encouragement. But, as I said, I shall appreciate it if you keep me informed. Good-night."

Five days later Tangier was excited. Late at night the city was still awake. Chance stood on the balcony before his

room and looked out at the glory of the moonlight, silvering the ancient walls of the Kosbah on the hill above the bay. The ordinary noises of the night were drowned in a harsh rasping murmur, which came up from the restless streets, from the thousand flat roofs, from the still open Moorish cafes—it was the mingling of countless whispered conversations in guttural Arabic. An *attaché* of the French Legation galloped noisily across the cobblestones of the Socco Grande, at Chance's feet. A group of Europeans rushed out of the hotel to hail him for news. But he was in too great a hurry to stop. There were lights in all the windows of the French Legation. But Chance's eye, trained to note the salient detail, watched the flag-pole, where a little electric light flashed nervously the dots and dashes of the telegraphic alphabet. Suddenly it stopped and Chance looked down to the Bay. A light on the foremast of the cruiser *Le Quatre Septembre* was flickering back an answer. He could not interpret the message, for it was in a secret code, but he knew very well what it was all about. An hour before, he had put his despatches on the wire.

Tetuan had that day proclaimed Mulai el-Hafid. The city had disowned the French Sultan Abdul-Aziz, and declared that Hafid, his brother and a true Moor, should reign in his stead. Further, the citizens had sent a ribald message to El Guelbas, War Minister to Abdul-Aziz, reproaching him for his French sympathies and saying that if he cared to visit Tetuan they would boil him in their choicest olive-oil. This was the news which was keeping Tangier awake.

It was momentous news. France's dream of a North African Empire depended on keeping Abdul-Aziz on the throne. It was only in his name that her army could march to suppress the forces of Mulai el-Hafid. So far, the Pretender's power had been limited to the Berber Tribes of the South. Tetuan was a Northern city, less than forty miles from Tangier.

This news was the cause of the city's whispering wakefulness. It was this news which had sent the French *attaché* gal-

loping across the Socco, which had lighted all the windows of the Legation, which was the subject of the cipher message flashed through the night to the cruiser in the harbor.

Gradually the city fell asleep. The hum of voices slackened and ceased. The moon sank down towards Djibel Kebir, its mystic sheen giving a certain beauty for once, to the ugly European houses on the Mar-shan. Somewhere in the city a water carrier tinkled his brass bell. Now and then a camel snorted in the Socco or a forlorn dog barked. Even the signal-light on the French Legation ceased to flicker.

But still Chance waited on the balcony. At last his patience was rewarded. He heard the faint click-click-click of a distant donkey-engine. As he had expected—*Le Quatre Septembre* was lifting anchor. He winked up at the moon and went to his room—contented. His

typewriter began to buzz. "After long signalling with Legation, French cruiser *4 Septembre* leaves harbor. Destination unknown. Probably patrol coast Tetuan." He had to make five copies in different phrases and sign his friends' names. For it was not expedient that their absence from town should be known.

Chance was to have little sleep that night. For even as he sent off his boy to the Eastern Telegraph Company's office with the dispatches and was turning to his bed, a brown skinned, half naked



It was after three o'clock when the runner brought Blake's message

runner was panting up the long slope of the last hill which separates Tangier from Al K'sar. He bore a message from Blake.

Three nights before, Sinclair and Blake, after a second hard day's ride, had stopped their horses at the top of a slight rise. Overhead, long plumes of clouds were just fading; the colors had softened, all except one splash of glowing orange to the West. On all sides, stretched endlessly gently rolling country—a deso-

late brown sea of little hills. The trail stretched out before them, down the slope, past a hummock of rocks—on, on to the horizon. Although it was the Fez Road, the main commercial route of the Empire, there was no traffic in sight.

"Beyond that next rise is Al K'sar," Sinclair said.

In the gathering dusk they pushed on. They had not gone a hundred yards when there was a flash from the rocks before them, the sputtering pop of a smooth bore musket and above their heads the sob of a round, uncertain bullet.

"Just like the beggars," Blake growled, reaching for the rifle which hung from his saddle horn. "Wait till it's too dark to get a sight before they open the ball."

"Put up your gun," Sinclair said. "Glad to see they've got pickets out. It shows they are expecting trouble and are ready for action. Follow me slowly."

Alone, he trotted forward, calling out a salutation in Arabic. A Moor clad in a brown *jillab*, almost invisible against the brown stones, came out to meet him.

"I am the Englishman you call Ben Clari," Sinclair said in Arabic. At a call from the Moor a boy of fifteen came clambering down over the rocks, carrying two long, cumbersome rifles. He ran to help Blake dismount.

Sinclair cut the salutation short, for he knew the picket to be a retainer of the man he sought. He spoke with authority.

"You must take my friend to Hadje Hassan. Tell him that what my friend says, I say. I carry the same words to Fez. I will take your horse, for mine is tired."

The Moor hesitated.

"Sidi," he said, "Hadj Hassan would be better pleased if I sent the boy with your friend and rode myself with you. The way is dangerous for a Christian—even for you."

"No! Change the saddles. The boy must stay to watch the road."

"It is dangerous," the picket insisted.

"It is necessary. Change the saddles."

Blake and Sinclair stretched their legs and smoked in silence, until the horses were ready.

"So long, Blake. See you in Tangier."

And Sinclair clattered down the trail toward Fez.

"Sidi Ben Clari is a brave man," the Moor said.

"Yes," Blake agreed as he climbed again onto his tired horse. And to himself he repeated the cadence of Forman's favorite ballad—"though they come from the ends of the earth."

Half a mile before the city they turned off into a by-path between dense hedges of giant cacti. Then they came to a wall and a heavily studded wooden gate. Within was a cobblestone court-yard, fantastically lit by flickering lanterns. Blake followed his guide, past a group of curious servants, into a room bare of all furniture except low divans; there he found Hadje Hassan. The old man's hair was white, but there were still streaks of black in his great beard. His flowing clothes also were all white. Two months before he had been Basha of an important province. But he opposed the encroachments of the French, and Abdul-Aziz had thrown him out in disgrace.

"You come from Ben Clari—you are welcome." And he waved his hand that the attendants should withdraw.

"The time has come," said Blake. "That is Ben Clari's message. It is time for the North to proclaim Mulai el-Hafid. It is even as he told you when he stopped here on his way North. The whole country waits for someone to begin. Ben Clari has seen the men from Tetuan—they will declare to-morrow."

"You are sure of Tetuan?"

"Si Mohammed Akbar has promised. They rely on you."

The old man pulled his beard a minute in silence.

"It is well," he said. "To-morrow we will talk it over with Si Raman el-Musa."

"But why not to-night?"

Hadj Hassan's eyes twinkled with amusement.

"You foreigners are all alike—always hurry. You are tired but you will not rest. In your prayers I suppose you ask Allah to hurry."

But he called his servants and putting on his heavy outdoor *jillab*, ordered the horses. He sent messengers to summon



two more of his friends and within half an hour, the five men were drinking tea and plotting busily in the house of el-Musa.

As soon as the gates of Al K'sar were opened, they rode in. And from the roof of a house next to the Grand Mosque, Blake watched the results of his night's work.

The first sign came a little after ten, when a sudden silence fell on the street of the brass-smiths. Even the apprentices stopped their hammering. The cobblers left their lasts, the carpenters laid down their tools, the wheels of the potters ceased to spin. Silently, in twos and threes, the men of the city made their way to the Mosque. Through the open windows, Blake heard the noise of many men praying aloud. But it was not as sustained a clamor as usual; often it almost died out, to rise again irregularly. At last, in one of these hushes, he heard the voice of Hadje Hassan praying alone.

"And may the protection of Allah—the Great, the Merciful, the Praiseworthy—rest on Mulai el-Hafid—Sultan of Morocco."

Again the clamor of universal prayer rose. The voice of Hadje Hassan was drowned; the men of the city had taken up his prayer. A solitary figure rushed out of the Mosque; so great was his hurry he had for-



"The 'bassador is sleep. No dare to wake him."

gotten his slippers. Putting his hands to his mouth, like a *muezzin* calling to prayers, he roared out:—"Mulai el-Hafid is proclaimed in the Mosque." Before he had finished his cry, two other Moors shot out of the door. Then they came in a torrent, rushing out like a flood from a broken dam. They embraced and kissed and pounded each other—yelling frantically the name of Mulai el-Hafid, the man who was to save Morocco from the Infidels.

The Square before the Mosque was a sea of upturned, yelling faces and waving arms. The roofs swarmed with women. Instantly flags appeared. Those who had it, displayed the red flag of the Empire—but any bright color served as well. The women on the roofs hung out streamers of yellow and purple and green and threw down their gorgeous scarfs and head-dresses to the men below. A procession started. With Hadje Hassan at their head, the people carried their rejoicing through all the crooked streets of the city. A new Sultan reigned in Morocco. Al K'sar with ten thousand tongues was proclaiming the news.

It was after three o'clock in the morning when the runner brought Blake's message to Chance. Again the typewriter began to buzz.

"Al K'sar, seventy-five



miles south of Tangier, proclaims Hafid. French officers prisoners. M'toogi has fled. Thousand Hafid horsemen near city. People shouting for new Sultan."

When he had sent off his dispatches, Chance walked across the Socco to a white archway and after kicking for a while aroused a Legation soldier.

"Give my card to the Ambassador," he said.

"But no, Sidi. The 'bassador, he is sleep. No dare to him wake," the native objected, rubbing his sleepy eyes.

In fluent and forceful Arabic, Chance told him unpleasant things about his ancestors until at last he took in the card. In a moment he came back, surprise having driven away his sleepiness. Salaaming deeply he said that the 'bassador had gotten out of bed.

In the library Chance found the old man with bristling mustaches, draped in a gorgeous Japanese dressing-gown.

"I've just put this dispatch on the wire, Your Excellency," Chance told him.

The old man adjusted his glasses and read it carefully.

"So? Is it confirmed?"

"Absolutely. Have you any word from your government?"

"No—only of course they are following events closely. This will interest them. I must say your friends have been very successful so far. I hope none of them will lose their lives. I am very much obliged to you for bringing me this news."

During the next few days Chance was exceedingly busy. It is no easy thing for one man to satisfy two great news agencies and three daily papers in a time of international crisis. And gradually as hour after hour went by and there was no news from his friends in the interior, he began to worry.

The third night—suspense had grown too acute for sleep—a knock at the door caused him to upset his glass of White Horse. His chair fell over as he jumped to open the door.

"Allah helps us," a Moor panted heavily. "Si Mohammed Fargi has just reached our camp from Laraiche—he

could run no further. The revolt at Al K'sar has spread to Laraiche. Mulai el-Hafid has been proclaimed. The tribes are excited—all for el-Hafid. They are up from Laraiche to Al K'sar, from Al K'sar to Tetuan. Tangier is cut off from the interior. A belt no enemy can pass."

"Good," said Chance, "bring Si Mohammed as soon as he is rested. I must see him."

And then locking his door, he went out on the balcony to smoke. The city was asleep, calm under the moon.

"You'll wake up when you hear this news," Chance said to the city; and then to himself: "Well, you're not falling down on this assignment, old boys—Forman, Blake, Benton. Tetuan, Al K'sar, Laraiche! Winning out? Sure! We've already won. Sinclair wont trip up. I guess I'll go in and drink a solitary toast to them all—to them and Morocco."

Once more Chance sat in the office of the old gentleman with upturned mustaches.

"Is this news from Laraiche enough?" he asked. "Have we delivered the goods? Or do you need any more proof that Abdul-Aziz is a bad bet?"

"Yes," the old man said, "you have proved your point. It is wonderful. How did you do it?"

"It was easy. Everybody hates the French and Abdul-Aziz hasn't a dozen real friends in the country. Mulai el-Hafid is a man after the people's heart, he reminds them of his father el-Hassan. It only needed a little noise and—the wall of Jericho tumbled."

"There is another question, a delicate one. Why did you do it? To use your American slang—you know I used to be stationed at Washington—what do you get out of it?"

The lines about Chance's face tightened for an instant, then relaxed. Laboriously and solemnly he crossed his knees.

"I don't know how I can answer that so Your Excellency will understand. We're not getting anything out of it—the way you mean. We—well—we sort of like Morocco. We're likely to live here what's left of our lives. And—well—we don't like the French. We prefer the

dancing of the Aïswáïa to the *Can-can*. We would rather be wakened by the Call to Prayer than by bugles. Personally I prefer a man who knows how to die, to a man who knows how to read. It isn't anything but rank selfishness, I suppose, but we like Morocco—as she is—and we're willing to take a few chances to protect her from France's indecent assault."

"Those are sentiments one doesn't expect to find in journalists."

"They are sentiments, Your Excellency, I couldn't expect a diplomat to understand."

The old man threw back his head and laughed heartily.

"That was a good thrust, I deserve it. But we must not quarrel. You will understand, I had, for the sake of my government, to find out if you had a price. Despite my profession, I can understand men who have none. And I have news for you. You must get this message, by secret sources, to Mulai el-Hafid himself: if all Morocco declares for him, my government will recognize him. I think you will agree that if we take the lead, all the other powers—including France—will follow us. The Act of Algeciras deputed to France and Spain joint police power to assist the Sultan in maintaining order. Not Abdul-Aziz, but the Sultan—whoever he is. If Mulai el-Hafid becomes Sultan, then France must work in his name. But first Fez must be the city to fall in line."

"We'll have the news in three or four days."

"I hope so."

"It will knock a horrible hole in France's dream of a North African Empire," Chance put in.

The old man did not reply to this. But he got up suddenly and turned his back on his visitor—to hide the gleam of triumph in his eyes.

"When the news does come," he said when his face was composed, "I will be glad to shake hands with your friends. I—who have been here only a short time—am beginning to share your love for

Morocco. We'll drink together and then forget this incident."

It came like a hurricane. The news rushed up from the South like the *shurgy* which blows down from the Anghera Hills.

"Fez has declared! Fez has declared! The Ulema and the people proclaim Mulai el-Hafid. The renegade mussulman, who wears the Christian cross of the French, is deposed. It is the end of the foreigner's Sultan. Mulai el-Hafid rides under The White Umbrella. Fez has declared."

But the first travel-wearied courier who brought the news did not go to the Legations nor to the Moorish authorities, but to Chance who sat alone in his room with the White Horse and waited. He sent the news across the Socco to the white haired old gentleman with upturned mustaches. That astute individual read it and smiled and sent back the answer.

"It is finished."

It was three nights later. Chance was speaking.

"He's sure to get in soon. A courier brought word that he slept last night in Er Rakeya. He's with the tribes that know him now. To tell God's own truth, I never expected we'd all pull through—Hello, Old Horse. How are you?"

Sinclair stood in the door—a bit more haggard than usual, a bit more worn—but with the same old look of indifference, the same skill in hiding his emotions which is the heritage of his race. Benton, belonging to the same race, gripped his hand silently. Chance and Blake and Forman pounded him on the back—laughing, jerking out foolish meaningless sentences, because the joy in their hearts could find no sane words.

There was something ceremonial in the way Chance poured out the White Horse, in the way Blake filled up the glasses with soda. Something reverent in the way these five players of The Great Game stood around and drank to—

"Morocco!"



When he looked again the *Onward* was half a mile away

## Burned At Sea

BY LINCOLN COLCORD

Author of "The Moths," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY J. PECK

\* \* \* \* and the supposition is that she was burned at sea.

*Maritime Register.*

HE never said a word?" asked Charlie Hall, helping himself a second time to hash.

"Nary word," answered the American Eagle. "Took his lickin' like a Dago—picked himself up after it was over, an' sneaked forrard."

"How'd it happen, anyway?"

The American Eagle set down his tea-dipper, and threw a glance about the forecastle. "Carlo an' me was tarrin' in the lower main riggin'," he began. "I finished my job, an' landed on deck just as Carlo started to come down. I reckon he must ha' slipped on the sheerpole; the first news I knew, he come flyin' through

the air, an' 'is tar pot fetched a swipe clear across the poop!"

"Deck just holystoned!" commented a voice from the shadow of a bunk.

"Exactly. Along comes Freeman, an' sees the mess. 'What's this?' says Freeman. 'I spill-a the tar-r!' says Carlo, tryin' to scrape it up. 'You spill-a the tar-r hey?' says Freeman, makin' a pass at him. 'I'll spill-a you!' Then he naturally wipes the deck up wi' that Dago. Carlo pulls a knife on him; Freeman takes it away, an' throws it overboard. That's all. I don't blame the mate. Damn a clumsy Dago anyway, I say! What d' you suppose he's up to? He aint been in for 'is grub."

Supper was over in the port forecastle.

The great foresail sent down a gentle air upon the watch as they tumbled on deck to enjoy the dog-watch. The ship was running dead before a light south-east trade-wind, two weeks past St. Helena and nearly to the Line. She slipped through the water steadily at a four-knot rate; aloft, a yard squeaked now and then, or a sail lost the wind and fell against the mast with a soft, purring sound. The Captain leaned over the port rail and shook his head.

"We'll lose the trades to-night, and then a week of doldrums!" he said to the mate. "Should have lasted a day or two longer."

"They may hold on light, sir," Freeman answered. "Watch that Dago on the forecastle-head!"

The Captain glanced forward. "Is he the man that spilled the tar?"

"Yes, sir. I hit him a clip or two, and he drew a knife on me. Nothing serious. A queer man, Carlo—well-meaning enough, too."

"You can't make a sailor out of a Dago," remarked the Captain. "It isn't in him. No use trying to knock it in."

Carlo, pacing the forecastle-head in a fever of excitement, had his own version of the affair. An accident, which he would have regretted—! The glaring injustice of the chastisement stung him more than the disgrace. It had absolved him of any remorse which he might have felt for his clumsiness. His emotional nature was thoroughly aroused; passions of rage and wounded pride struck him in alternate waves. An angry strength surged through his slight frame. If he had known—if he had been prepared!

What a mistake this voyage had been for him! He had left an Italian bark the previous year in New York, and on the advice of a boarding-house runner, had shipped on the American clipper *Onward*. With a pang of homesickness, he recalled how different life had been on the Italian bark. The men there had talked his own tongue; a few of them had hailed from his own Sicilian village. Here he was an alien, at the mercy of uncouth savages. From watch to watch he worked like a man surrounded by enemies—listening for quick orders

which he could not comprehend, dreading the outcome of every turn of his hand. He could not seem to learn the new ways. The constant fighting with fists dismayed him; the coarse voices and rough ways of his shipmates jarred on his sensitive nerves. They made jokes at his expense—jokes which he could not understand. A dozen times a day, he was made to feel their scorn.

This attitude extended to the officers. Throughout the homeward passage they had treated him like a child—pushed and pulled him about, cuffed and kicked him. They had been making game of him, because he was a foreigner, and small! Now they had beaten him—but he would show them yet that he was a man!

Approaching steps broke in upon his thoughts. A sailor was coming to take the look-out. The Dago slunk down the opposite steps, trying to reach his bunk in the port forecastle without observation. A crowd of men by the fore-hatch caught sight of him, and raised a shout.

"Hey, Carlo! Where you been?"

"The mate tanned your hide, eh?"

"Oh, yes," answered Carlo, gritting his teeth. "I don't care!"

"Better not fool with knives too much," put in the American Eagle. "It don't pay."

So they all knew that he had drawn a knife! After he reached the shelter of his bunk, he tried to recall the fight. The scene ran in his mind like a confused dream; he himself could hardly remember the incident of the knife. The act had been instinctive. *They* considered it more honorable to fight with naked fists, like animals! In the darkness he shrank within himself to think of those powerful blows.

At eight bells the port watch turned in. By nine o'clock the forecastle had grown quiet. The Dago could not sleep. His eyes were swollen where the mate had struck him; his head ached with a heavy throb. A dim light hung from a beam in the center of the forecastle; he sat up and looked along the row of bunks. Everyone was asleep. As he sank back, a face appeared and vanished before his excited vision—the mate's face,



as he remembered it bending above him in anger that afternoon. The phantasm gave him a shock; it crystallized his thoughts. Out of chaos rose the dominant spirit of revenge.

The minutes dragged on interminably, while he brooded over his wrong. At intervals, he sank into a feverish semi-consciousness. Wild and imaginative scenes floated across his sight. He saw Freeman, the mate, pacing the quarter-deck in the dead of night. A second form—his own—crouched in the shadow of the rail. As the mate wheeled near him, he leaped from the shadow, and struck. Freeman went down, turning his face as he fell. That face—! The Dago laughed softly, and stretched out his hand—Something roused him: he found himself clutching the cold blade of his stiletto, hidden in the folds of the bed-clothes.

Again he drifted off, and dreamed that he saw the mate pacing the quarter-deck. The wind seemed to be astern, the water rushed by in whirls of foam. As Freeman paused by the rail, he leaped upon him—pinned him there for a moment, looked deep into his eyes, then cast him overboard. He watched the foam close over the detested face, erasing it from the world.

Once or twice the Dago lost himself. As sleep mastered him more and more, the mate's face haunted him persistently. He saw him fall from aloft, and strike on his face. He saw him strangled—the face black, the eyes staring. He saw him with throat cut from ear to ear—the face set in a terrible grin of death. Once he seemed to be falling through endless space, side by side with the mate; as Freeman turned and twisted, his face flashed here and there. The Dago struck at it. For a moment it vanished; when it reappeared, blood streamed from it. He cried aloud, struck again and again, felt that what he hit was soft and dead—

"Shut up, you' ravin' Dago!" a man opposite cried with an oath.

Carlo roused, lay very still, and tried to recall what he had been saying. Suddenly he realized that it was oppressively hot. The shutter above his bunk was closed; he found the hasp, and threw it open. Two men sat outside on the

water-way, holding a low and unintelligible conversation.

He wondered who was smoking—thought that everyone in the watch had gone to sleep long ago. Perhaps the man he had awakened—He leaned out and looked for the glow of a pipe; the fore-castle was dark and silent. A breath of tobacco smoke might have come through the windows; he glanced at the men outside. They were not smoking. He fell back wearily, resolved to sleep.

Another cloud of smoke drifted across his bunk, drawn by the window, and he sat up with an instinctive fear. His dulled perception was slow to form conclusions. He sniffed again—wood smoke! The explanation flashed upon him: the ship was on fire! In one wild leap he landed on the deck, screaming.

"What the devil's struck you now?" growled the voice.

"Fire! Fire!" The Dago danced on the hot deck. At that cry they came tumbling out, half awake.

"Feel the deck! She's afire down forward!"

"Bring the lantern!"

"Here you are! Smoke comin' up along the bulkhead!"

"Gimme a knife. The pitch is boilin'! There!"

"Look down there!"

"She's afire in the fore-hold!"

They turned as the second mate, a tall, raw-boned man, stepped among them.

"What's all this row?" he demanded.

"Come! What's up?"

"Fire, sir! Carlo, he smelled—"

"Fire!" He grabbed the two nearest men by their shirt-collars. "If any o' you—"

"No, sir! No, sir! S'elp me God, we was all asleep! Look down here, sir!"

Smoke was pouring from the opened seam. The men drew back in a huddled group. Behind, them, near the door, Carlo prayed aloud in a hoarse, rapid whisper.

"Get some clothes on! Boots! Boots!" yelled the second mate, clearing his way to the deck. "Hustle now! This means business!"

A growing panic robbed the Dago of all sanity. He rushed out, and followed



the officer aft. Up the quarter-deck he ran, shrieking "Fire! Fire! Fire!" The mate, dashing up the forward companion in his underclothes, encountered him just outside the cabin door, and without stopping, leveled him to the deck with a tremendous blow. From the fore part of the ship men were swarming aft,

into gear. You, Tom and Charlie, pass forward those buckets from the after house. Haul up the foresail, Mr. Sands, and get the sail off the foremast as quick as God will let you!"

"Aye, aye, sir! Aye, aye, sir!" The men began working furiously, their courage restored by a steady word of command.



"The first news  
I knew he come  
flyin' through  
the air"

uttering a medley of cries. The steersman abandoned the wheel; the ship began to swing from her course. Then above the uproar the Captain made himself heard.

"Get the fore hatch off, Mr. Freeman. You damned Dutchman, go back to the wheel, or I'll blow your brains out! A couple o' men rig a snatch-block on the fore-royal backstay, and roll aft the deck-tub. Carpenter, get the force-pump

The foresail hung in the buntlines when they started the fore-hatch; a lurid glare flickered among its billowy curves.

"God, that looks wicked!" cried the Captain, jumping to the main-deck and running forward.

The mate met him at the corner of the house. "She's all afire forward, sir," he exclaimed.

"Well, get the sail off the foremast!"

"I'm afraid we'll never handle it, sir!"

The Captain wheeled on him angrily. "Shut up your mouth! Don't you know better than to talk like that? You're as bad as the Dago!" Carlo ran by them, still screaming. "Set him to work drawing water—keep him busy. He's a bad influence in a time like this."

The wind was fast dying; on the port beam lightning flashed incessantly. The glare from the fore-hatch grew brighter; the ship radiated a dull glow into the night. A tense fear settled upon the ship's company; they worked swiftly and silently. They were fighting fire on the open sea.

## II

They had been fighting three hours. Soon after midnight the wind died to a flat calm; the sails lay against the masts, and the ship lost steerage-way.

"Those damned fire-works!" the Captain muttered. "They were stowed forward. I'm afraid she's gone, Mr. Freeman." He swore savagely.

"It's hard, sir!" said the mate, wiping his flushed face. "It's hard!" He glanced at the men crowded abaft the forward house. Their half-naked bodies gleamed in the wild light of the open main-hatch. Flames ran along the hatch-combing like thin red hands, got a hold, and reared up suddenly. Below, a roaring furnace licked up bucketfuls of water without effect.

"We mustn't let the crew get started, Mr. Freeman!" said the Captain in a low voice. "You may as well get the boats out. Keep cool, and keep the men cool!"

Freeman returned to the main-deck, and bent over the hatch for a last look. On the opposite side of the deck, the Dago gave a mad cry. He had seen the mate's face, drawn and hopeless, shining in the firelight. It stood out boldly against the darkness, as he had seen it in his dreams. Again his spirit narrowed to a single thought; his hand stole to his breast and touched the stiletto blade.

That cry was a signal to the crew. They threw down their buckets; one of them broke from the crowd and came towards the mate. "How long are we

goin' t' stay here?" he growled, pointing to the hatch. "Look a' that!"

Freeman knocked him down without a word. "We'll stay till the Cap'n gives the word!" he said, kicking the prostrate man. "Now, get up! Go forward and find a watch-tackle! Get up off your knees, you coward!" An angry murmur came from the crowd. Freeman stepped towards them. "Behave yourselves, now, or some one'll get hurt! Charlie, run up and put a sling on the starboard fore preventor backstay. Yes, the boats are going out—"

Alongside the ship, the water stirred with a slow, oily motion. They sent the two boats overboard like feathers; hands that had been backward at fire-fighting, now worked with a will. The fire swelled, reached about the main-deck, and caught among the lower shrouds. The boats were dropped abaft the main-channels, and loaded with provisions. From the fore-hatch, now neglected, spurted a tall streamer of flame, that ran up the mast like a bright vine.

"I can't hold the men much longer!" said the mate to himself. "Get a move on, there, with those stores!" he shouted. Something led him to the port rail; his jaw dropped, and for an instant he stood rooted to the spot. "Good God, look what's coming!" Then he turned and ran aft, stumbling along the alley-way. "Cap'n! Cap'n! Where's the Cap'n?"

The man at the wheel pointed down the after companion. "Cap'n! Below, there!" shouted the mate. "Come on deck, sir! Big squall—"

The Captain had been making the last entry in the log-book; he came up two steps at a time, the pen still in his hand. A high black squall hung above the stern, spreading well on the port beam in a wide arch. Lightning knit a pattern on its face; by the flashes they could see the hollow emptiness of the huge cloud. A cold puff of wind fanned about them, like a breath from a cave.

"Go forward, Mr. Freeman! Look after the men!" said the Captain sharply. "Let go the main mizzen t' gallant hal-yards—let 'em run down." He turned to the helmsman. "Keep her off before it when she gathers way. Put your wheel

*up!* D' you understand?" He stood by the weather bitts a moment, waiting for the ship to begin to move. The topgallant yards dropped with a rush; the sails belied and flapped in the freshening breeze. A confused noise arose in the waist of the ship. Suddenly a sharp cry for help rang out.

"Come forward, Cap'n! Come forward—" The mate's voice sounded faint and hard-pressed.

The crew had broken traces, under terror of the squall, and were making a rush for the boats. That call for help was the mate's last cry; a man hit him from behind with a capstan-bar, and knocked him into the scuppers. There he lay stunned, while the mad mob swarmed over his body. Fear was loose at last—a savage fear that showed in their eyes. Behind them, flames from the main-hatch tossed higher and higher, threatening the side where the boats lay.

"Jump! Jump!" yelled the leaders, as they swung into the main rigging.

They found themselves looking down the barrel of the Captain's gun. He had run along the bulwarks, and stood braced against the sheerpole, sweeping the deck with a revolver. For an instant the issue trembled in the balance; the leaders fell back, but the body of the mob pressed forward under its own momentum, until the crew were jammed together against the starboard bulwarks. A strange hush fell upon the deck; every eye followed the wandering barrel of the revolver. The Captain waited until the silence had grown intense.

"Get away from that rail!" he shouted suddenly. "Do you want to die?" Out of the corner of his eye he saw that the wheel had been again deserted. "Go back and put the helm up!" He pointed with the revolver. "Hans, go back to the wheel! Move—"

"You can bore me full o' holes—I wont lose my turn—"

The Captain's finger trembled on the trigger. Before he could fire, a voice spoke from the rear of the crowd. "I will steer!" It was Carlo, the Dago.

"Run! She's coming to!" commanded the Captain. "Put the wheel *up!*"

As the Dago dashed aft, he cast a

triumphant glance at the senseless body of the mate. An insane fancy had inspired him to this course. When he felt the breeze and saw the ship broaching to, he realized that a turn of the wheel would rake her deck with flame. The mate lay just abaft the main-hatch; he could not possibly escape. Better than the knife—to burn him with fire! And the others—they might all be caught! He reached the wheel, and whirled it in exact contradiction to the Captain's order. At the same moment that the rudder jammed hard-down, the squall struck the *Onward* aback, fore and aft; a tremendous crash sounded above the roaring wind.

Without warning, the foremast snapped off at the deck, dragging the main-topmast and topgallant-mast overboard. A large block fell from the main-topmast as she heeled to starboard, and struck the whaleboat alongside, ripping half her bottom out. Loaded deeply, she sank like lead. The Captain, still backed against the main-shrouds, grasped a ratline and looked aloft; about him the standing rigging sagged and whipped with vicious swings. He turned, confused: at that instant a man threw a heavy wooden bucket in his direction. It struck him full in the face—crushed his features shapeless. His grasp on the rigging relaxed; he sank slowly to his knees, and slipped overboard between the lanyards. As he disappeared, the crew swarmed up the bulwarks and swung into the channels.

"Jump! Jump! There's only one boat left!"

It seemed to the Dago that the ship would never come into the wind. Time was tangible, passing with the rush of the squall. By and by he heard a confused shouting over the side. He ran to the starboard rail. They were jumping for the boat; some one had cut the painter and she drifted rapidly to leeward. The water was full of swimming men. Two or three had reached the boat; one of them got out an oar, and pulled madly. She came around in a wide arc, and forged under the stern of the ship. Soon a dozen men were hanging to one rail, dragging it under the choppy seas. A fight began;

screams cut through the squall, oars flashed in the lurid glare of the fire. The Dago followed them aft—leaned out, shouting, applauding the brutality. He saw a sharp oar-blade descend on a swimmer's head; two arms shot out of the water, a bubbling cry reached his ears.

He laughed aloud. They had escaped the flames—to kill each other! Then a second inspiration of seamanship was given him, and he saw that he still had them at his mercy. The vessel had gathered sternway—the boat lay off the starboard quarter. He swung the wheel till the rudder was hard-a-starboard. The fury of the squall was driving into the *Onward's* reversed sails; she staggered blindly, and an unnatural wave rolled from either quarter. In a moment, her stern slid off towards the boat. In the thick of their hideous battle, they did not see the ship until she was upon them. The Dago leered into their white faces, showing for an instant below him. He heard frantic curses; their uplifted oars rattled against the ship's shelving stern. She rose on a little sea, hung above them, came down—A crash, a few last cries: the boat was gone!

The Dago stood up, and looked about him. A fearful quietness pressed on his heart. What did it mean? Ah—he *was alone!* Alone—a burning ship—the boats gone! A deathly terror clutched his brain; he gazed at the wheel with blank eyes. What should he do? He threw up his hands; the wind flung them down. He opened his mouth: the wind stopped his voice. The squall was at its height; aloft, he heard the broken gear snapping among the sails; he felt the deck tremble beneath the crash of the wreckage. He was lost—alone!

The ship now headed directly into the wind. Thick smoke poured aft. The Dago choked—fought at it with his hands. Fool, fool! To forget that the fire would burn him too! There must be *something*—some way—Cold sweat broke out on his forehead when he could not remember how to steer! A rush of sparks swept by, a gust of burning wind scorched his face. With a despairing cry he flung himself to the deck, and crept into the shelter of the after house.

Then the smoke eddied and the Dago shrieked with a new terror. The mate stood in the port alley-way. His face was disfigured, his clothes were charred to the waist; he swung his hands back and forth with a fanning motion. "What's happened?" he gasped. "Where's—"

"Don' come!" begged the Dago. "I aint kill you!"

The mate dropped into the shelter as the smoke again closed in. "Hell, I'm not dead yet!" he cried.

The Dago's heart leaped at the words. Not dead! A companion! He crept closer, forgetting his hatred in the wonderful comfort of a human presence.

"Oh, Chris'!" he sobbed. "Gone! All gone! I can' help—"

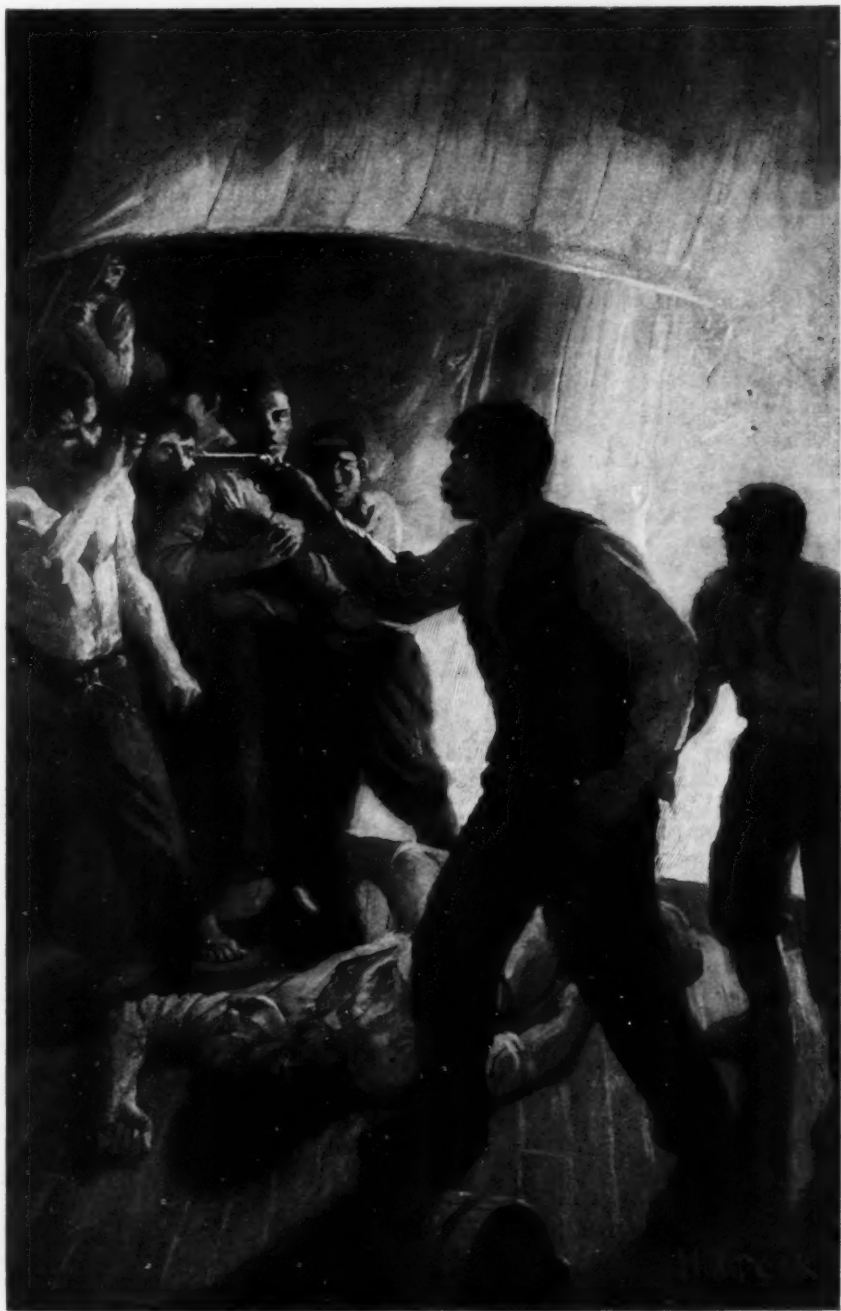
"Crawl to the wheel, and keep her hard-a-starboard," the mate whispered. "Perhaps her stern will swing out—" His voice stopped suddenly; he fell back unconscious.

The Dago felt his way along the deck, and hung to the lower spokes of the wheel. After a while, the smoke drifted over the port quarter, and he saw that she had come around till the wind was abeam. He pulled himself up, and looked aloft. The sails on the mizzen were trembling, lifting; another moment, and they caught the wind. The ship hung for a long time—then slowly gathered way. Now he remembered! Frantically he put the wheel over; she answered his touch, paid off, and once more flung the banner of smoke and flames over her bow.

The Dago fixed his eyes on the compass-card, and steered. Every time the ship swerved his heart came into his mouth. He must not lose control of her now! She steered hard, with the only sail on the mizzen-mast. He whined and prayed as he struggled with the wheel. Dawn broke at last, the wind fell, and the fire worked aft in the face of the driving rain. The mate stirred, opened his eyes, sat up, and gazed at the Dago in bewilderment. "What the devil!" He held up a burned hand, regarded it for a moment, and got his bearings with an oath.

"So she paid off," he said, staggering to his feet and holding himself up by the edge of the house. "Where are the boats? Where's— How long—"





A strange hush fell upon the deck; every eye followed the wandering barrel of the revolver

The Dago covered his face with his hands. "Gone!" he sobbed.

"Well—" The mate clutched the rim of the house, and chose his words slowly. "We've got to get out! There's a boat!" He pointed to the Captain's dinghy, lashed on top of the house.

"How can—two—" began the Dago, shaking a hand with first and second fingers extended.

"We *must*!" cried Freeman. "Unhook that boom-tackle!" He pulled himself up the steps, and lurched forward. Everything that he touched gave him intense pain. He set his jaws with desperate resolution, threw down the coil of the spanker halyards and began to cut and knot a sling. After great exertions, they got the boat clear of the rail, and lowered her away.

The ship had swung for the last time into the dying breeze; the fire was upon them. As the boat touched the water, the Dago threw himself from the mizzen channels into her stern. The mate gave a parting glance about the deck, slid down the painter, cut the boat adrift, and tumbled in a heap on the forward thwart.

"Burn, damn you! Burn!" he cried, rocking his body to and fro.

When he looked again the *Onward* was half a mile away, still head into the wind. Flames towered above her mizzen truck. The squall had passed; the roar of the fire came to him across a calm sea. On the eastern horizon the sun rose hot and clear.

### III

Throughout that day the mate sat on the forward thwart, staring straight ahead. The pain of his burns had become a torture. He held himself bolt upright, breathing through clenched teeth. The sun would have killed him had he been well. Once or twice he glanced at the burning ship; at last he realized with indifference that she was gone. He had not seen her go. After that, he forgot her. External thoughts were secondary; the pain monopolized his *ego*. His one instinct was to beat that pain, and live. The fight grew worse as the day wore on.

The Dago slept. The excitement of

such a twenty-four hours had exhausted him, body and spirit. At noon he roused for a moment, dipped his hat in the water and pulled it low over his eyes. The heat seemed to have overpowered him. Under a cloudless sky the tiny boat floated in the heart of a shimmering silence. Not a breeze ruffled the water, not a draught stirred the tropic air.

The day passed, the sun lowered and shone beneath the Dago's hat-brim. He awoke, sat up, looked forward. An appalling wave of memory struck him. He recalled the events of the night—the ship, the fire, the falling mast, the savage fighting alongside. The perspective grew clearer; he jumped into the present, remembered how they had left the vessel, realized where they were. The vessel—! He scanned the horizon wildly, followed and completed its unbroken circle. Nothing in sight! He jumped up, rocking the boat violently.

"What is to do?" he cried. "No water! No bread! No ships— Is many ships come this place? Is any land—?"

The mate turned, showing a face drawn with anguish. "Shut up!" he said slowly. All the life was gone from his voice. He flung out his arms with a gesture of despair. "Leave me alone!" he groaned, crouching in his old position on the thwart.

Twilight came on. The glow of the sunset faded; out of the east crept a mysterious, purple gloom. A thin moon trailed on the western horizon. Stars appeared in the midst of the encroaching shadow. A vast loneliness settled upon the ocean; for countless miles on either hand, nothing moved or made a sound.

The Dago kept his eyes on the bow. He felt that the mate was dying; the thought dismayed him. To be alone with Death—in the darkness—he knew that it would drive him mad! Already he was half insane with thirst and fear. His eyes became disordered; he saw spurts of flame, dizzy revolving globes, shapes that swelled to enormous proportions, flickering phantoms that came and went with inconceivable rapidity. Suddenly, the face that had haunted his dreams the night before presented itself close before him. His throat closed on a scream. It

was the mate's face, looking at him from the bow of the boat. In the dim moonlight, it seemed soulless, vacant, hideous beyond words.

The Dago reflected rapidly. Freeman must be mad. No man could have a face like that, and not be mad. Would he remember who was in the stern? Idiot! Madmen attacked everybody! But Freeman was injured, dying. He might be able to beat him off. The Dago listened. In the great stillness, he heard an intermittent breathing—slight movements. Freeman was shifting his position! Cold terror, such as only cowards know by night, ran in the Dago's blood.

The sky had grown darker. A mist seemed forming before his eyes. God! For light to see—in case—! Again he listened. A sudden cry electrified him, a hoarse bellow, like the challenge of a wounded beast. An indistinct form upheaved itself in the bow. The Dago shrieked, and covered his face with his hands. An abrupt motion caused the boat to pitch spasmodically. A jar shook her from stem to stern. He heard a gasp, almost at his feet. The profound silence of the night succeeded; the rocking of the boat gradually died away.

The Dago had passed into a world of unreality, far beyond the bounds of fear. He dared not look, or move. The mate was dead! A *Thing* lay in the bottom of the boat! He felt that it was watching him. A flash of lightning from the oncoming squall illuminated the scene; the Dago snatched away his hands. Yes! There—! The body had fallen between the midship and after thwart; the face was upturned, thrust into the bilge; the eyes were wide open. With a convulsion of utter terror, the Dago saw that they were fixed on him! He carried the nightmare into the impenetrable blackness that followed the lightning. Something awful, unimaginable, must have entered into Freeman's body! Hark! What was that? Was it stirring? Rain began to fall; the rising wind cut sharp waves against the boat's side. She pitched restlessly once or twice. Again the lightning—the Dago saw the body of the dead man move. It rolled over; an arm that had rested across the after thwart dropped with a

thud. Blackness swallowed the world once more. The Dago sat quite still, nerveless, undone. When the next flash came, he beheld the dead arms stretched out towards him across the bottom-boards. The *Thing* seemed crawling—approaching. The light vanished. He felt a touch—something soft against his ankle. Then his brain snapped, and consciousness left him.

## IV

He awoke into a world of light and delirium. Where he was, how he had come there, he could not recall. He accepted his situation without question. The past intruded but dimly. He had escaped from some calamity; in a vague way, he felt the influence of criminal occurrences. A murder seemed to be impressed upon his mind. A face constantly eluded him. Vacantly he surveyed the waste of waters, examined the boat, observed the dead body at his feet. Thirst raged throughout his body. At last he tried to drink salt water, choked, and fell back exhausted. The sun climbed higher; a second cloudless day began.

For hours the Dago sat huddled in the stern-sheets, motionless, gazing into the sky with blank eyes. Monstrous phantasmagoria crowded upon him—fragmentary episodes of memory, wandering images, imaginative fears—all bound in a strange continuity. By slow degrees, he sank into somnolence. The sea about him seemed to be the Mediterranean; he made out a coast near by—recognized a familiar scene of his youth. Sounds of oars came faintly to his ears. He heard voices, swelling, pursuing. The old furtive feeling returned; he shook off his drowsiness and sat up. Some one had called to him. He must hide; he must never allow himself to be found—never, never! Listen! Again—nearer— He looked around.

A boat was rapidly closing in on his starboard quarter. A man stood up in her stern—waved at him, shouted! So—they had almost caught him! But there was still time. Under water, they would not be able to follow his course. He could swim to that coast. Once he had swum miles under water; it was to reach

an island where a girl lived; he remembered— Ha! Now—

"Stop him! He's going to jump overboard!" cried the mate of the bark *Ella*, giving a violent wrench to his steering-oar. The whale-boat struck the dinghy with a crash; the bow-man, waiting for the chance to jump, reached the little cockle-shell while the command was being uttered. But it was too late. Before the boats touched, the man that they had been watching for the last hour, was gone.

"Look here! See what's in the bottom!"

The mate of the *Ella* peered across the two gunwales. "Dead man, huh?" he commented. "Any signs o' foul play?"

"No, sir. Burned to a crisp!"

"Keep your eyes open for the other man, boys. He may come up. Too bad we surprised him. Probably crazy with hunger and thirst. Looked like a Dago, didn't he, Jimmy?"

"Yes, sir. Here's a name on the bow—*Onward*. The paint's all blistered."

"*Onward*! I knew her mate, Buck Freeman. Let's have another look at that body. Good God, it's him!"

They waited half-an-hour, spying in all directions. Nothing appeared on the surface of the water. "No use staying here," the mate said at last. "He's done for by this time. Let the ocean bury its dead! Hmm—I knew him well—Buck Freeman, o' the clipper-ship *Onward*—burned at sea!"



For hours the Dago sat gazing into the sky with blank eyes



# The Broken Cadence

BY MARGARET BUSBEE SHIPP

Author of "An English Elopement," etc

GARRARD'S purposeless tramping had brought him to a cove some miles away from the village on the Nova Scotia coast to which he had come for the month of August. The spot was so lonely that he was surprised to see a motor-boat at anchor there. Its solitary occupant had not seen Garrard's approach and was unaware that he had paused upon the cliffs above to look down at her, drawn by the mute misery of her face.

She was lying on her back in the stern of the boat, staring with unseeing eyes into the soft, foggy skies overhead. Her face was too slight and too weary to lay claim to prettiness, though the lips were sweetly curved in spite of their downward droop, and the eyes were the gray-green, changing, color of the sea.

Garrard was wondering whether to offer help, when a jolly Nova Scotian came up from behind him, recognized and greeted him in the cordial, native fashion, and then climbed down the trail to the boat. To this boatman's query as to whether she was ready to return, the girl answered in a toneless voice which sounded as if its strings had been broken:

"I suppose so. But please don't talk if you don't mind, Andy."

As Garrard resumed his dogged plodding, his thoughts dwelt insistently upon the wan wistfulness of the young face.

"Poor little thing! Whatever the trouble is, she is worse cut up than I am!"

When he tried to engage Andy, who had often taken his father and himself out fishing the summer they had spent in Nova Scotia some years before, the old boatman shook his head reluctantly.

"I'm sorry I can't do it, but I'm engaged by the month. She pays me regu-

lar day prices, no cut rates, so I ought to be satisfied."

Nevertheless he heaved a sigh, and his face was as lugubrious as was possible to his Santa Claus countenance.

"You don't seem very happy over your job, however."

Andy touched his forehead significantly. "Something's wrong. All the young lady wants to do is to get as far out of sight of land as she can, and there she'll sit huddled up in the boat, without speaking a word, until I 'most forget the sound of my own voice."

But a few days thereafter, poor Andy had the opportunity of talking all he pleased, and his boat rocked lazily at the slip to which it had been tied overnight. Out of sheer idleness, for time lay heavy on his hands during his enforced vacation, Garrard walked over to Andy's cottage, and found him in bed, badly crippled up with rheumatism. He was greatly discouraged at losing his patronage, for summer was the time in which he earned almost all the ready money he had during the year.

"And the poor little lady—what she'll be doing I don't know. Most of the boats belong to the hotels and they can't throw over customers that have been standing by them all summer and give their time to one. I've got to hire a boatman, but it'll eat up my profits."

A sudden inspiration came to Garrard.

"Let me do it for you. In a fortnight or so you'll probably be able to take the boat again. I like being on the water all day, and I'll take your customer out. She knows you're laid up? Well, I guess she'll be so glad to get hold of another silent boatman she won't be asking questions, and I'm not at the same hotel with her."

Andy consented gratefully.

After putting on an old sweater, Garrard hurried to the slip, where he found the girl waiting. She saved his embarrassment by addressing him first.

"Are you the man who is to take Miss Erwin out? Andy sent me word some one would take his place. I am sorry to hear of his illness."

That was perhaps about ten o'clock, and it was after one before she spoke again. Garrard had taken her far beyond Shag Rocks, and was then returning. He had not suggested an anchorage, feeling in some uncommunicated way that the swift motion soothed the restlessness of her spirit.

She turned to him and said contritely, "I fear I have made you late for dinner. You must remind me when it is time to go in. I forget."

She had forgotten the very existence of the new boatman, as a matter of fact, after her first sense of relief at finding him taciturn to the point of dumbness.

"Did Andy tell you where he anchors every day on the smooth beach near his home? He comes back at four and takes the boat out again. If you are detained at times, it does not matter."

Garrard beached the boat, and Marjory sprang unaided to the shore. All her movements were quick and light. As he had to pass by Andy's place on his half-mile tramp to the hotel, he stopped to ask whether or not Miss Erwin ate any dinner.

"Not a bite, and it certainly does bother her aunt over at the hotel. She just walks around in the woods, or rests in a shady place under the larches. Sometimes she takes her book along, but I guess she must be a poor speller because she's been on the same one all summer, and hasn't got far in it yet."

When Garrard returned from his dinner, he brought some fruit.

"The air can't help you if you don't eat," he said.

His voice had that quality of persuasive strength of one used to coaxing the sick and nervous. It was the tone which had so often coaxed his mother into compliance. The memory gripped him.

Marjory thanked him listlessly, but though she took only a single bite of the

peach he peeled for her, he felt as if it were an entering wedge. The next day he brought a few red raspberries, laid upon a grape leaf, and triumphed within himself when she ate them.

One afternoon when they had gone up Bear River, something went wrong with the engine, and by the time he could get a man in the village to fix it, the sun was nearly set.

"You will be late in getting back to your hotel," he said to her, "and you have had no dinner, so I ordered some tea sent you here from the hotel."

A waiter with a small tray followed him. Marjory shook her head with a gesture of distaste. "I am not hungry."

Garrard took the pot from the waiter, filled a cup and handed it to her. He was unaware that the manner in which he did the trivial act was as to an equal. In the limpid clearness of Marjory Erwin's eyes, a look of bewilderment gave place to a flash of anger. She drank the tea in silence, and gave the waiter a dollar in spite of the Canadian honesty which made him insist that he had been paid already.

Then as the boat sped out into the peaceful water, she looked straight at Garrard as if seeing him for the first time. Her voice was low and disdainful:

"You are not a professional boatman?"

"No, I am Richard Garrard, a civil engineer."

"Then why are you here?"

He met the question frankly.

"I saw, as one could see at a glance, that you were in great distress of mind. You wanted to be quiet; Andy wished not to lose the money he sorely needs to put aside for the long winter. It seemed a chance to serve you both. I am not laying any claim to knight-errantry—my underlying motives were entirely selfish. I, too, am passing through a period of storm and stress, and I hoped the daily exercise and the loneliness of the sea would help me to regain a control that has slipped from me."

It was the first time he had ever alluded to his mother's remarriage, and the remembrance of it brought a haggard look to his face.

Nothing is so intuitive as sorrow, nor

any ear so attuned to every shade of tone as that of the violinist.

"I could play that deep tone of his voice into my violin," was what Marjory thought, and, with a swift revulsion to self-pity: "Oh, I *couldn't*!"

The stab of her own limitations made her gentle to all sorrow, though, as was characteristic of her solitary nature, she was absolutely incurious as to what phase of it her companion knew.

"I regret that I judged you hastily," she said. "You have been most considerate. If you really wish to act as boatman until Andy is well again, we shall let it rest there."

"Thank you."

Through the wonderful Northern twilight, with the afterglow staining the sky with saffron and rose the boat cut its way through the water. Though no words passed between its occupants, each felt that the situation was changed.

At dinner time the next day, Garrard turned abruptly to his companion.

"If you are determined to commit suicide," he said, "why not utilize this convenient Basin to drown in, instead of choosing slow starvation?"

The painful flush that dyed her cheeks, the widening of her grave, sweet eyes, made the man realize he had put a rude hand upon issues larger than he knew.

"I—I gave you no right to speak to me so," she gasped, with her hand at her throat. "You presume!"

"On my position as your boatman, perhaps; but not on the inalienable right of any human being to save another from disaster or death."

"Death!" she echoed, as if the word were sweet. "I should never take my own life. But do not dare to asperse those who do—those high-strung, sensitive souls who find the pain beyond their strength to bear because they suffer in a way which is beyond the capacity of ordinary people. That highroad is not for me—not for me. I promised my father."

He was torn at the sight of the distress he had awakened.

Suddenly he understood.

"Your father must have been Rudolf Erwin then? Forgive me. I did not know."

Vaguely he recalled that the wonderful *virtuoso* who had been the furore of a decade before, had been stricken with violinist's cramp and had committed suicide in the hour in which his physician pronounced his doom as a musician.

"I heard him play while I was at the university," said Garrard.

"Tell me." Marjory's voice was swift and responsive.

"I have always loved music in a dumb sort of way, but until I heard your father I never dreamed how audaciously glad the violin could be. You never imagined anything so gay, so capricious, so care-free. It was a gypsy song of his own; all the riotous Romany blood seemed in it. I can't tell you how it stirred the *wanderlust* in me. I never forgot."

Her eager little face made him think of a flower that holds up its cup to the dew.

"Oh, it is so good to hear of him from one who remembers! I have no near relative except my mother's sister, and she will never speak of him to me. She hates the music which took his life and which she thinks is taking mine. Tell me more."

"There is not a great deal more. I think the thing which most impressed me was the fact that he didn't care about the crowded hall, nor the people, nor the applause. You felt it in that 'air apart' which he had. I remember (forgive it) that my chum said, 'That man doesn't care a damn whether these seats are empty or crowded! He is playing to his own ears, and he doesn't know whether anybody else is listening.'"

The girl's hands struck together rapturously.

"Yes, yes, that was my padre! I was only twelve when—when the end came—but I see that rapt look of his now."

Not as if excusing, for to her loyal heart he needed no excuse, she explained:

"He was very sorry afterwards. They took me to him and I cried out with a child's terrible selfishness, 'Padre, you mustn't leave me! Aunt Cornelia doesn't like our violins.' All at once he saw what the years ahead would be without his sympathy. He said, 'Marjory, you will play better than I. If trouble like mine overtakes you, remember that the

whole is greater than the part, that *life* is more than its music. Promise me that you will be braver than I have been.' I promised, not knowing what I promised, and they took me away, and I did not see him again."

"And now you are finding it hard to keep your pledge?"

"Yes." Her voice dropped until it was barely audible. "I cannot play any more. I have the same trouble in my arm that he had. I, who have been practising seven hours a day for these last happy years, am told I must not touch my violin again for two years."

"But you can grow into a knowledge of the truth which was a legacy from your father. Even if the music is the very food of your soul, it remains, as he said, that the 'life is more than meat.'"

"Do you find it easy to learn?" she asked wistfully.

"No."

All his father's bitter and futile struggle flashed through the son's brain; the pretty bit of porcelain he had married when a boy; the sacrifice of his medical career to the routine of business as a manufacturing chemist that he might be able to supply the luxuries which looked so large to a petty mind; his determination that their only son should not be sacrificed too. Yet it had come about that when Garrard was at work on the road in Argentina, in which he was interested with all his heart and mind, he had been summoned home by his father's critical illness. After his death, Garrard had taken up the burden, and for the first time realized all it had meant to his father throughout the tragical, barren years to meet the hourly demands of attention, the constant whims of vanity. It was as imperative to her that her son should sympathize with her for wearing black, which proved unbecoming, as that he should stand between her and all business annoyances. Garrard gave up his profession, temporarily, to fling himself with ardent sacrifice into his father's place. At the end of two years the bit of porcelain, with her roseleaf daintiness so well preserved, had told him with girlish elation that she was to marry "a man who understood her, as poor Dr. Garrard never

had." He was the principal stockholder in the chemical company, a swaggering, boastful fellow whom his father had found particularly offensive, and whose recommendations were limited to those which might be summed up in figures. The ties of blood are so strong that Garrard, who had never permitted himself to criticise his mother, was hurt to the core of his being by this supreme disclosure of her trivial nature. He had come to Nova Scotia, because his father and himself had once spent a happy vacation there, and one place would do as well as another until he could return to his work. He was under contract to go to Montana in September.

As this flashed through his thoughts in swift review, he said, for the first time voicing the trial which he had undergone:

"You have held to your faith, but lost your work for a while; and I have kept my work, but for a while I have lost my faith. And both of us need to learn patience and retrieving."

Instead of going to the usual place for anchorage, he fastened the boat at the slip nearest her hotel. His brown eyes met hers with compelling kindness.

"Now you're going to eat your dinner to the satisfaction of your Aunt Cornelia, and then you must rest, and perhaps take a nap. At five your boatman will be here to take you over to the island."

In the week which followed Garrard lost sense of his personal sting. Marjory was so spent with fighting alone that she let him decide for her, almost unconsciously. Instead of the motor-boat there were days when he took her out sailing, the sail-boat flying over the water like a great lopsided bird. Sometimes he rowed for hours on the tranquil waters of the Basin, and though he occasionally coaxed her into taking an oar, her efforts could hardly be said to have added to the ease of handling the canoe. Nevertheless, he had the satisfaction of seeing that sunshine and sea and the magical Canadian air were uniting in their gracious work, and that a faint color was stealing under her skin and the shadows lessening from beneath the sea-colored eyes. She talked rarely, but when she did, it was with the



quick eagerness, the childlike frankness, of the musician. Has anyone ever really loved music—and lied? It is as abnormal to find the musician who is secretive and deceptive as the little child who is a born liar.

Sometimes they drove through the peaceful country beyond the hills, and one morning when he came to take her for a drive, he found her waiting impatiently. Cheeks and lips were red, and she clasped something in her arms.

"Take me somewhere away from people. I must hear my violin, I can't stand the silence any longer. Yes, I know the doctor said I must wait, but I'm so much stronger that just once cannot hurt."

The way was very beautiful and Marjory talked and laughed light-heartedly. She seemed keenly alive to every impression, the friendly warmth of the sunshine, the wine color of a cluster of berries, the fragrance of the balsams. Presently a path, at right angles from the main road, caught her fancy.

"I love that hint of mystery about a path which winds out of sight. When I was a child, I used to feel that just such a half-hidden trail might lead to fairyland. Shall we see if this does?"

Garrard tied his horse in front of the solitary cottage on the road, and together they took the winding way, green underfoot and redolent with the breath of pines. They came to a cleared, grassy place where the ground rose into a tiny hillock, and the path ended abruptly against a thick line of evergreens.

Garrard threw himself upon the ground to watch her. A lump came into his throat as she took her violin from its case, and laid her cheek against it for a moment. So might a mother hold her child in loving absorption. All that was strongest in him responded to her love of her work for its own sake, to the individuality that could grow and develop without adventitious aids.

There is a sound of beginning rain, so low, so soft, that one wonders whether or not the summer shower is falling; it is well-nigh as voiceless as tears which are too brave to fall. So the violin's notes brought to Garrard a sense of suppressed.

inarticulate sorrow—of a proud grief which stifles its sighings. Yet, as the music swept on, it seemed to the man as if he watched the marshaled procession of every unfulfilled hope. He could see the brown leaves of autumn falling on a baby's grave, see the very smile with heart-break in it, with which the wife turned to her husband to take up again her broken life. The futility of his father's sacrifice swept over him.

"Don't!" he cried hoarsely. "I cannot bear it!"

The notes trembled into silence, as she looked at him with an absent smile.

"I—I had forgotten you were there. Why, what a boy you are—and I had thought of you as so strong."

He found her chiding sweeter than anything she had ever said to him, because, for the first time, it touched a personal note.

"Is this the Romany air you liked?" she asked, and again the passionate cry of the open road stirred his blood.

"What is that sound?" she questioned when she had finished. "It seems to me that I hear the sea, and I thought we had driven directly away from it."

Together they explored beyond the wind-break of evergreens to find a curving ledge of basaltic rocks, every soft shade of brown, mauve and gray, with the sea lapping at the base.

"Oh, my poor fiddle!" cried Marjory in dismay. "We must have been driving in a semi-circle, and I thought we had come as far away from the sea as possible and that the soft air under the pines could not injure my strings." Then with a sudden caprice, she said: "There's a song which has been haunting me all summer. It is but a step to that rock where I can get that mighty diapason for an undertone. I shall give you a song of the sea; not its hidden, cold caves nor its white, forgotten dead—Listen!"

She chose a huge boulder which jutted over the water, and Garrard spread his coat for her to sit upon. He listened, enchanted, as she improvised.

"It might be the flight of a gull!" he recognized in triumph. But even as it seemed to Garrard that he could actually see the white breast against the blue of a

midsummer sky—the joyousness of wings—the flight was broken; the violin stopped with a discord, as Marjory's wrist gave way.

"Oh, my God!" she moaned. Had she wept, Garrard might have borne it better; it was the somber despair of her eyes—"eyes colored like a water-flower"—that was beyond his power to endure.

"I love you, I love you!" he cried insistently, in spite of himself, in spite of his purpose not to tell her yet. "Let me take you away with me when I go; let my love shelter you. When the strength comes back to your arm again, into what waste places of the earth will you bring music, what far corners will you make glad! Oh, Marjory, be my wife!"

She arose, startled and frightened, and somehow (it happened so quickly that Garrard never understood) the violin slipped from her hands into the waters lapping the rocks beneath.

As quick as the flash of the gull's wing which she had just interpreted, the girl leaped after it into the sea.

Garrard's leap was almost as quick and as instinctive. He was not aware of the wrench of pain as his ankle turned on the slippery rock nor the icy chill of the water, but only of the thrill of thanksgiving as he caught Marjory's shoulder and realized that she was his to save.

The tide was running out swiftly, and it was a difficult matter to gain foothold on the jagged rocks, covered with wet sea-grass, but the flood tide of strength seemed running in his own veins, and somehow up the treacherous slope he made his way with his burden. When they had reached safety again, he said as to a wayward child:

"Oh, little dear girl, little bad girl, you did not even know how to swim!"

"I forgot I didn't. I saw the padre's violin slip—"

Her words died on her lips, for without a sound, Garrard had crumpled up like a broken thing, and fallen at her feet.

She stared for a moment, unable to believe that the strength which had been sheltering her all these weeks and upon which she had unconsciously grown to depend, had suddenly failed them both.

She called his name wildly, but the ears were deaf which had been so quick to catch her lowest sigh. She stretched him upon the ground, loosening the collar at his throat and chafing his hands. Never had he seemed so big and tall, nor she so incompetently small. The coldness of his face and hands terrified her; the cool breeze blowing upon his wet clothing she feared might chill out his life. She seized the coat which he had so lately spread to do her service and put it over him.

"Oh for blankets—for a fire!" she groaned.

She felt the box of matches in the pocket of his coat, and she looked about on the desolate coast for a bit of driftwood. Nothing but rocks met her gaze, and the little pools between them, gay with mosses and tiny barnacles. Yes, there was the violin.

Without a moment's hesitation, she broke it against the rocks, shivered it into splinters and tried to light its damp wood with the matches. The tears rolled down her cheeks as she tried again and again in vain. She fell to work once more, desperately chafing and rubbing him, with all the might of her slim, supple hands.

Garrard opened his eyes dully, not seeing anything for a moment; but the cry of "Thank God!" from the lips he loved best was like cordial to restore strength.

"It's my ankle," he said after a few moments, his thoughts slowly regaining coherency. "I didn't know I had hurt it until I felt that sharp twinge, and everything grew dark. I'm sorry I played the baby act, just when you needed me."

He turned away for a moment, for the sweet pity in the face bending over him was too poignantly dear. He saw the splintered violin, the burnt-out matches, the futile, pathetic attempt at a fire.

"Marjory! You did that for me?"

Wonder and a great joy surged through his being, as he held out his arms and drew her to him.

"It—it wouldn't light," she sobbed against his breast.

But it had served to light the divine fire that alone has power to keep its flame steady and unswerving through life.



From his tiny cabin the towerman looked upon the town

## The Towerman

BY EDWARD HUNGERFORD

ILLUSTRATED BY MONTE CREWS

FROM his tiny cabin perched high upon the steel-trussed draw, the towerman looked upon the town. Aurora lay in a deep-rivered ravine; the waters of a still wider river lapped against its useless, rotting wharves. The railroad spanned the ravine back of the town and high above it. The lofty bridge gave way to a long tunnel—from the fair vista that you gained as your train rumbled over the long span, you were

plunged into the blackness of the nether world. It was a wicked hole. The towerman knew that—and counted the very minutes—

The towerman—his name was Dexter Carey—looked down upon Aurora. The little village slumbered under the mighty weight of snow that a hard winter had given it. In the crisp moonlight, Carey saw the white-blanketed roofs of the houses, the three pointing spires that

showed God where his shepherds labored, the chimney smoke ascending straight into the still winter's night, the lights within the houses. He saw it all and yet he saw not. All his eyes caught was a single light and that light was a monument to his restless brain. The light marked a house—her house—a parlor—her parlor. As he stood in the window of his little cabin and looked upon that distant twinkling light, he wondered once again if Herman Ranck were sitting there beside her. He wondered if the supervisor dared. He swore aloud. Then he laughed. He passed his hand across his brow—it was chilly in the cabin, but sweat stood upon his forehead.

He would have turned to the window again but his sounder clattered noisily to him—a big freight locomotive, waiting for a clear block to the bridge and the tunnel, called. There was a fifteen-hundred ton train struggling up the long grade at the far north portal of the tunnel and Dexter waved a lantern for the engineer of the second train to come up into the tower. He wanted to get that lighted window—and Herman Ranck—out of his mind.

The freight-runner came up into the tiny place panting—it was a hard tug up the ice-coated ladder.

"Orders?" he puffed.

"Nothing doing," said the towerman.

"Well, I'm—" began the old freighter, but the towerman caught his arm.

"Don't, Henchy," he said and he looked straight into the engineer's eyes. There was something in that look, a note in the boy's voice—he was really little more than a boy—that softened the man from the cab.

"Sick?" he asked.

"—and tired," replied the other. "Henchy, did you ever get that lonely that you wanted to get up and yell?"

"I generally whistle," said the engineer, gravely, "or try to hum something sacred. It's soothing." He gazed searchingly into the towerman's eyes. He was remembering that nasty wreck at Logan Castle—Bennett and the 637 in the ditch together and Bennett never to crawl

again out from under his engine. There had been a lonely towerman that time—they had carted him off, chattering and gibbering—a pitiful wreck of a man. He looked at the towerman again—then decided that a man might be lonely and still keep his senses.

"You've got the river here an' the boats all summer—to say nothing of the road an' all the talk of the stove committee a-droppin' over the wire. There aint much you key-tappers miss." He laughed confidently at young Carey. "There's a nice looking girl up at K. G."

"Got a wooden arm when she begins to send," snapped Dexter Carey. "There's a girl at Warner's and she's cross-eyed and there's a skirt at the wire at the Junction who's got a husband out in the bad lands trying to forget her. What the dickens do I want of a girl, Henchy?"

The engine man did not answer that question. He saw that he was in on the wrong siding. He began upon the chatter of the division—Pete Murray was out at Henderson. Pity the T. & S. folks couldn't have hung on to the old M. M.—he having stood his term in that shop since war times. Over on the Upper Wyandotte, Drummond was slated for a blue envelope—even Superintendents get that sort of thing now and then. Drummond had made a mess of it. The line had lain down on them three times in a month and perhaps they'd be wishing Hep. Russell back.

Eleven minutes to come off Forty-seven's time and Kelly was saying that he'd bid in for a new run, rather than tackle that—perhaps the bright lot at Headquarters would feel satisfied when they had the Limited, with all her pretty fixings, lying on her side in the ditch—Morris, the agent at Aurora depot, said that he'd sold that lot of his down in the village to some one who was going to build a big house on it. That some one was a rich farmer over on the North Scriba road—Herman Ranck—who was the supervisor and—

What was the matter with young Dexter Carey? Here he was looking hard again and grabbing Henchy's arm.

"Sometimes I get sick of the road gossip," said the towerman. "You aint so



bad, Henchy, but some of 'em—it's a confounded shame that they aint handling the throttle down at Tremont."

But Henchy only thought of how they lifted Bennett out from under the 637—and the row they made over that towerman. Still he said:

"Takes that preference a long time to worm out of the old hole."

"'Tween slow orders and bad rails, there isn't much choice," was the towerman's slow answer. That gave Henchy a new cue.

"They'll pay the price," he remarked. "Buildin' fancy new depots up at Rockville an' Somerset an' all along the line and settin' out geraniums an' other posies 'long the right-o'-way, while they let that hole—the nastiest this side of Chicago—go along in that shape. Spurgeon, who's working with the track department, says that it would only cost them a couple of hundred thousand to line Sugar Hill tunnel and make her safe—and jus' yesterday I seen in a Tremont paper as how T. & S. was a-goin' to spend one million dollars on a new depot there. That's front and here in the middle is this vile hole."

The towerman did not answer in words but silently opened his report-book in order that Henchy might see and not repeat. His finger was index. The engineer saw it in an instant.

"How big a rock was it that fell?" he demanded.

"Twice as big as your tough old head," said Dexter Carey.

"God help us," was Henchy's reply, "an' damn them forever if ever a mortal man looses a hair of his head in that wicked hole."

Now he thought he understood. This towerman was different from that other. They would never have it on Carey, if worse came to worse. The telegraph key changed its note. Carey caught it.

"Clear block for you now," was all he said. "Come again." And after the engineer was out of the cabin he thrust his head out of the window.

"You didn't mind coming up, Henchy?"

"Not at all," said the engineer, in his honest, brusque way.

The supervisor of Aurora township that night made his way slowly from a little house in the village to his cutter, which stood at the stepping-stone—and confounded women all the way. It was slippery footing down that front walk and Herman Ranck, being a big man, must needs watch each step carefully. Once he nearly slipped on an icy flagstone—and then he confounded women the hardest. He unblanketed and unhitched his mare mechanically and all the while wondered how a mere slip of a girl—for whom a full-grown man might even be permitted something approaching contempt—could expect to twist that full grown man about her little fingers. And that was just what Florence Cheattle was doing—making a fool of Herman Ranck—Herman Ranck, the third richest man in the township and by all odds, its biggest political power. He put the horse-blanket and the hitching-strap in the cutter. She was making a fool of him, dangling him, at her own sweet will, like a jack on the string. But Herman Ranck could not let go that string. Blakely the sheriff, and Bert Fassett, the supervisor from North Scriba, were his closest cronies, and Herman Ranck felt intuitively that they were watching him—would triumph inwardly at the downfall at the slender hands of a young girl of one who had not before so fallen. The supervisor slapped the reins upon his mare's back. She broke into a gentle trot and he passed down the village street without even a look at the lighted window under the gable which betokened the girl's room—Blakely and Fassett might laugh now; that best, last turn would be his. For he was going to marry that girl. She was going to pay that price for these long months of girlish indecision. She was going to be Mrs. Herman Ranck if he had to wait another five years and all those five years see the sheriff laugh as he came driving down from Florence's little home.

The supervisor of Aurora township had set and locked his stubborn will. She could have anything that she wanted. He would quit his lonely farm and build her the best house in town on that dandy lot that he had just bought from Morris,

the railroad agent. She could have a hired girl, two hired girls—a spanking team of horses to drive—but she must marry Herman Ranck. His teeth set at thought of that; he was known throughout the entire county as a man who obtained that which he sought.

He drove through the heart of the village—past the little group of stores, their lighted windows all etched and frosted by the crispness of the winter's night, cut through another deserted street, past the last of the houses of Aurora, up the long tug of Sugar Hill. All the while he belted and riveted his own determinations: Florence Cheatle sooner or later—and it would be better for her sooner than later—was to be Mrs. Herman Ranck. The mare struggled hard up the long hill and somewhere beyond the cross-road where Jared Van Beak's little brick house stood upon the very edge of the highway, the supervisor drew her up for a resting spell. He let his glance go off over the sleeping country-side. The infinite constellation of the stars, the soft pity of the moon, watched over him. God's world was asleep, the village where His humans fought their little lives was hushed in the stillness of the night. It was all very, very quiet, save off in the distance a railroad train whistled mechanically its crossing calls. The train came nearer—you could hear its dull roar from afar—and the supervisor in his snug coat and cap could see through that wonderfully clear night the point of the headlight and the occasional reflection of the open fire-box upon the engine's flowing plume of smoke. The dull roar changed to a lively rattle—the train was upon the high bridge; then there were reverberatory echoes as it swept into the black bore of the tunnel under Sugar Hill. The supervisor's eye lingered upon the bridge, upon the tiny, lighted cabin perched high upon its draw—and for the first time that night his complacent thoughts went to Dexter Carey—and lost their complacency.

Confound that young whelp, too. Blakely was an elder in the Adventist church and Blakely used to tell Herman Ranck slyly that he'd seen his girl at

evening meeting, with young Dexter Carey—came to him time and time again with that cheerless message. And Herman Ranck had eyes of his own. He knew and once when he had faced the girl and had begun to accuse her, she had flushed in anger at him and laughed at him—in triumph. After that his stolid self understood more. She cared for that penniless pup who worked nights in that thankless job atop of the railroad trestle. She had continued to care for Dexter Carey, had told the supervisor so in a thousand different ways. But he knew the power of money, the almighty power of persistence and so he buried his dislike of the younger man. He gave her presents, took her on long drives off over the country high-roads—and she, girl-like, accepted them all for the mere physical joys they gave her. As for mental joys—that was a different matter. For mental joys there were those Sabbath evenings with good-looking Dexter Carey at meeting, the little keepsakes that he sometimes gave her—and which she kept close to her heart.

The mare had rested long enough. The supervisor came from his reveries and started her up the hill. But his gaze for a long time rested on the lighted cabin atop the steel-trussed railroad bridge.

"Confound that young whelp," were the words he thought and did not say.

After Henchy had gone tugging his noisy way up through the tunnel, there were two other time-freights to follow—certainly traffic was running heavy these nights on the T. & S. and no wonder that the officers could talk about million-dollar depots. Then there was a time before Forty-eight—the up Limited—should go thundering her way over the division, and in that time the towerman turned to the cabin window that opened upon the town. His keen eye focused itself again upon that single light—which blotted itself out upon the infinity of the night as his very gaze was upon it. A moment later there was another light close by where the first one had shone for him—she was up in her little room under the gabled roof. Her caller had gone; the towerman drew a quick sigh of



"For the love of God, stop forty-seven!"

relief. When, a few minutes later, the second light was suddenly snuffed out, Dexter knew that she was off for slumberland and in his heart of hearts he wished her a safe voyage.

He passed a down local train and turned again to the window. He could see a little house—her house—under the glistening softness of the moon—and once again he wished her well. He let his thoughts go toward Herman Ranck—and the sale of Morris' lot down there in the village. In other times his heart had hardened when he thought of the supervisor—but to-night, after Henchy had told him the news, he began to see things in a new light.

Herman Ranck must have money if he were going to build a new house in Aurora. Dexter Carey had no money—unless you could call a bare sixty dollars in the savings-bank, material wealth. And Florence Cheatle had no money either. It was hard living at times in the little house that showed like a tiny grey square under the moonlight. The Cheatles were proud folk—but Dexter Grey was poor, too, and he understood.

The towerman hung out of the window of his cabin and forgot the bitter chill of the winter's night as he gazed down at the little house. Herman Ranck had money. And he? He was crowding along on a bare living wage with no prospect of immediate increase. He understood. He closed the window suddenly and sank at his little desk.

He understood. He must give up his girl. She would need money and the supervisor had it. The supervisor was willing to buy the best lot in town and probably put up the best house in Aurora for her. And he—Dexter Carey—was the obstacle. He understood perfectly. But it was hard.

Men do hard things and that night in his cabin the towerman set his mind. He set it while his brain throbbed so that he could not hold his head erect.

"Oh, God," he kept muttering, in the fullness of his resolution.

He rested his head a long while on the little desk. Then he lifted it long enough to pass a fast-freight up through his block. As the train whirled under his

very feet he let his head drop again. The roar of the train across the span and into the tunnel echoed dimly in his ears. The clattering sounder echoed dimly, too. The routine of the orders came to him as the small-talk of a party of men in an adjoining room might have come to him. They were clearing Forty-seven, the down limited, and the crack train of the division, out of Somerset.

"To C. & E. of train forty-seven," the instrument chattered in its monotone. "Proceed to Tre—"

The sounder stopped short.

In that instant the towerman was on his feet, in the next at the cabin window. From out of the tunnel there came a dull roar—and it was not the echo of a panting, puffing locomotive.

Dexter Carey knew that roar. He had been waiting for it a very long time. And now—the time had come.

He was back at his key, with a quick and cat-like leap; one moment his fingers were fumbling with the brass pegs on his little switchboard, the next they were tapping on his key

"W-K, W-K, W-K, W-K—"

That call of distress, the C-Q-D of the steel highway, roused a dozing chief despatcher at Tremont into action. He acknowledged the call.

"For the love of God, stop forty-seven," the sounder called in distress to him. "The roof of Sugar Hill has caved in," and then "Dexter Carey."

The despatcher rose with an oath. For an instant the room danced about his eyes. The operators looked up at him and scented trouble. He righted himself, with supreme effort. The despatcher is the captain on the bridge, the general in the thick of fight. He cannot afford to lose his head. He dropped into his chair again and tried to call Somerset Junction—at the end of the big division yard and five miles to the south of Somerset depot.

It was no use. His key was an impotent voice in that wilderness. The sounder did not echo its tappings. The line was dead.

He rose from his chair again—this time with a wilder oath—and faced the little room.

"The roof of Sugar Hill has caved in



and carried down our wires," he shouted. "Get a relay looped around into Somerset over the Great Midland's wires. We've got to stop forty-seven at Chadd's Bridge."

That meant preparations—almost infinite preparations—and all the time a heavily laden express train was rushing to her doom in the heart of a smoke-filled, rock-choked tunnel. And while those preparations went under way, with marvelous rapidity, the despatcher still swore. He swore not at the telegraphers who were doing their best, but at the niggardliness of a railroad that would carry its telegraph wires—the quick, tingling nerves of its entire organism—through a hole like Sugar Hill in order to save a few dollars in monthly up-keep.

"They could have carried the line right over the crest of that hill and never known the difference," he kept repeating. "Other roads do it that way and other roads—" He finally checked himself and bent over a perspiring operator. "Got it going?" he snapped. "Bully boy," and he sank in a chair at the operator's desk. His long nervous fingers began tapping the key.

"It's important that we get Chadd's Bridge," he was repeating now, in his nervous way. "It's the last night-office before the tunnel—the very last." And while his teeth chattered that refrain his nervous fingers tapped another.

"C-B, C-B, C-B, C-B," they called.

And after an eternity, that lasted less than sixty seconds by the big clock, Chadd's Bridge answered.

"Stop Forty-seven," ordered the key, peremptorily.

Then another eternity—and then—every excited operator heard the sentence of death:

"Too late. Forty-seven cleared here three minutes ago."

The despatcher did not swear now. He began to cry softly like an overwrought child. He slipped mechanically to his own sounder and had the little cabin at Aurora Bridge in an instant.

"We've tried to catch Forty-seven at Chadd's—and failed," he tapped on his key. "It's up to you—Dexter Carey—it's up to you."

For seventeen minutes and a half after he had sent the bad news pulsing to Headquarters the towerman sat—as one in a trance—at his telegraph set. It was an eternity to him, too, but he knew that headquarters was bringing all its mighty resources to bear on the situation. The responsibility was off his shoulders. For a moment he had thought of trying to climb Sugar Hill and flag Forty-seven at the far north portal. It was no easy trip that—over a slippery country road in midwinter; but he was young and strong and alert—and Forty-seven never carried less than three coaches and five Pullmans, filled with tired folk—folk who put their entire reliance on the railroaders. But then he had laughed at the idea. His orders were to stay by his key. Headquarters was solving the problem.

And then the sounder had sung a new command to him.

"It's up to you—Dexter Carey—it's up to you," had come winging sixty miles through the winter's night to him. Seventeen minutes and a half! If he only had seventeen minutes and a half now. If that seventeen minutes and a half had not forever slipped by! He was quickly in hat and mittens—an overcoat was out of the question for the trip he had to make. He slipped down the ladder—made his way slowly over the ice-coated ties of the high trestle. It was a fool trip—and an impossibility—but the towerman knew.

"It's up to you—Dexter Carey—it's up to you," was ringing in his ears. He bent his head lower and quickened his footsteps each time he heard it.

It was a fool trip—an impossibility—and if the towerman had only permitted himself to think of it, he would have known that. It was a good two miles and a half over the crest of the steep hill and down to the north portal, where Forty-seven was due in just twenty-eight minutes. The stoutest athlete could not have done it that night—over that icy, treacherous path that climbed to the west of Sugar Hill and then swept down the slope toward North Scriba.

The towerman slipped repeatedly as he hurried, lantern in hand, along the

road; once or twice he almost fell flat. But he kept his pace, past the little cluster of darkened houses at the old bluestone yard, past the Wesley chapel and its little burying-ground where the winter winds in the trees sang countless requiems for the dead, up toward Jared Van Beak's little brick house at the junction of the highroad. And before he came to the highroad he wasted nearly sixty precious seconds in getting out his watch, lifting the lantern close to its face.

Nine minutes gone—nineteen minutes left. He lifted his eyes up to the clear winter's night. Perhaps God had willed that Forty-seven—But then the order rang in his ears again:

"It's up to you—Dexter Carey—it's up to you."

He closed his eyes and inspiration came to him. Inspiration offered him hope—faint hope—but hope nevertheless. He staggered up to the door of Jared Van Beak's little house and began beating upon its stout oaken panel, like a man gone mad.

Jared Van Beak was going to have a telephone. It had been the talk of Aurora that the old Dutch farmer had at last yielded to so radical a new thing. Perhaps they had put his 'phone in already. Perhaps—but it was a hope. The towerman beat wildly upon the door, called loudly for help.

A window went slamming open, a night-capped head was thrust out through its casement. The head execrated the disturber of the peace but the towerman cared not for insults then.

"It's Dexter Carey—from the bridge," he called. "Let me in. Don't ask me questions. Let me in—"

Another eternity—then the stout door opened and the half-awakened farmer bade him enter.



It was a good two miles and a half down to the north portal

"Have you your telephone?" he demanded.

"A fool idee, but ma was sot on it—" began the farmer.

"Is it in?" demanded the towerman and then he saw the familiar box at the end of the hall. He hurried to it.

"They jus' put it in to-day," explained the bewildered Van Beak. "Don't think it's a-workin' yet."

But the towerman caught up the receiver, sent the little handle of the bell whirling.

"Hello—hello," he shouted.

Again eternity. And then:

"Hello, yourself," in the dulcet tones

of Sadie Wiggins, the night central in Aurora village.

The telephone in Ranck's kitchen was ringing madly. For an instant, as the supervisor paused at his bedroom door, he considered going to bed and letting the contraption ring itself out. The last time he had answered it late at night, the call had not been for him at all, but for one of the other parties on the line. Central was proverbially careless. The telephone was a nuisance and Herman Ranck had only put his in the farmhouse, because of the earnest solicitation of his mother. The bell kept ringing—insistently—and the supervisor slowly descended the creaking stair, his lantern still upon his arm. He lifted the receiver of the telephone. There was no mistake this time.

"How's that," he repeated, "the Limited—?"

He listened intently as the idea slowly came into his mind.

"Huh," was all he said. "T. & S. was never very particular 'bout using me decent when they set fire to my wood-lot." A horrible suspicion forced itself upon him. Perhaps that fresh young Dexter Carey was playing a joke upon the supervisor. It would be like that young whelp. He gave voice to that suspicion over the telephone wire.

"Huh," he said again. "Well, I'll see if you're joking or not. What'll you do for me if I get down there and flag that train?"

A low whistle escaped from the supervisor's thin lips.

"Anything?" he repeated.

He nearly let the receiver drop, but he gathered his nerves together and said:

"I'll take you on *anything*," he said slowly. "You'll promise not to go around to her house any more—to keep away from her?"

For an instant the supervisor's voice faltered. He was driving a hard bargain, a vile bargain, if you please, and in that instant he realized the vileness of it. Then—a man thrives by taking advantage of his opportunities—and the bargain was driven. He listened for a moment to instructions as to signaling, dropped the

receiver, opened the kitchen door and went stamping down through the thick snow to the railroad tracks at the back of his place. As he went forcing his way through the drifts, his lantern bobbing upon his arm, he heard the whistle of the down express at the highway crossing two miles up the line.

They made Dexter Carey station-agent up at Somerset for that night's work at Sugar Hill. That was the best berth vacant on the morning when King Snowden, the veteran General Manager of the T. & S., read the reports of the cave-in of the tunnel-roof and the saving of his pet Forty-seven. The appointment to Somerset—think of it—\$175 a month and a heap of perquisites. It reached the towerman before he was out of his little boarding house, in the shadow of Aurora Bridge—after a half-dozen sleepless hours upon his bed. He read the telegram of congratulation, the order for his promotion, without a smile, without the changing of a muscle of his face. They crowded around him—his fellows from the line—and wished him luck and joy and happiness. He answered them mechanically; his hand was limp as he stretched it out to meet their warm embraces. Morris, the agent at the depot, came hurrying to him. Some of the Aurora folks wanted to give him a little supper party at the Eagle Hotel, he explained, just to show Dexter Carey what they really thought of him.

"No, thank you," was the towerman's lifeless response. "I'm hurrying off to Somerset."

"We'll get up the supper for to-night," urged Morris, "and the line's blocked anyway."

Carey shook his head.

"Nothing doing," was the reply. "I'm crossing the river and catching the 3:10 on the Midland up to Somerset this afternoon."

As he drove across that ice-bound river he did not look back even once at Aurora upon its shore, at the high hills that bound it in, the thin structure of the railroad trestle behind it. He could not trust himself to look back at the little town—her little town.

The supervisor came more often than ever before to call at the little house in Aurora village. He passed with becoming modesty, his own important part in the stopping of the Limited on the night of the tunnel accident, and Florence quickly saw that he did not like to talk of it. She put that to his credit, and because of it suffered him to take her to Sabbath evening meeting. Once begun, with the supervisor, that quickened into a habit. Herman Ranck began to call three nights a week, instead of two.

"Seems to me," said Sheriff Blakely to Bert Fassett, "that Herm's making headway with his girl."

Bert Fassett was something of a philosopher and he was slow to answer:

"Dexter Carey's gone from Aurora. Tell you, sheriff, that's the difference. You can read it in her eyes."

And so you could. If Florence Cheatle's tongue did not tell the truth of her heart, her very features belied that instrument. You could see the difference. Sadie Wiggins, her chum, who worked nights on the Home 'phone, saw it and knew. And Sadie Wiggins had other reasons for knowing. Florence knew, too. She had ceased asking herself why Dexter Carey came no more, sent her never a card or letter or message of any sort, why he had not come to bid her farewell before he left Aurora. He had promised so much, if he should ever get a raise in pay and all Aurora folk said that to be station-agent in as big a place as Somerset must be big pay. It was all very perplexing and the harder she tried to solve it, the more perplexing it became. Finally, she ceased to trouble her pretty head. She began to accept more and more the attentions of the supervisor.

But in her heart of hearts she could not forget. Sadie Wiggins was going to spend a vacation week in June up at Somerset and she wondered if Sadie would bring back any news of him.

Above Sadie Wiggins' much puffed head as she sat at her switchboard and carefully manipulated the plugs and cords was a printed notice in a frame that had sunk deep into her soul.

"Any operator who willfully divulges

to anyone but the persons for whom it is intended, the contents or the nature thereof of a telephonic message," it plainly said, "is punishable by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than two years, or by both such fine and imprisonment."

That horrid notice kept away all lurking joy in working for the telephone company. For Sadie Wiggins knew the secrets of Aurora.

The obnoxious notice burned itself into her soul again as she sat of a summer's night—the night after her return from joyous Somerset—at the switchboard once more. She read it mechanically, then turned her attention to the drear business of her board. But while her nimble fingers worked with plugs and cords, her equally nimble thoughts were back in Somerset. She had had a great time and Dexter Carey had been the greatest feature of it. Somerset was a regular metropolis. It had trolley-cars and an opera-house and Dexter Carey had taken her to the opera-house twice. He dressed better than any fellow in Aurora and he must have a swell job. When he had placed her aboard the cars to come home—less than twenty-four hours ago—he had given her a big bunch of flowers and a five-pound box of candy.

She had kept her eyes closed all the way back to Aurora—and dreamed of good-looking Dexter Carey. Suppose that she might be Mrs. Dexter Carey and live in a nobby flat in Somerset?

But there was bitterness in that cup. All the time that he had been with her he had asked about Florence Cheatle. Sadie might shut her dancing eyes hard and blot out many things, but she could not shut out the hungry look on his face as he asked about Florence Cheatle. And she knew—she had good reason for knowing—

She droned at her switchboard that summer's night and risked her precious job by inattention to querulous subscribers. Finally she got up and took down the offending notice from over the switchboard. She would have liked to smash it into a thousand pieces.



The law: that was it. She could keep the word and spirit of the law—and probably win Dexter Carey into the bargain. Fellows were scarce in Aurora and fellows of Dexter Carey's sort were scarce anywhere. The path of law was the easy path.

The hard path was the sense of innate justice within her—the knowledge that she held in her secret keeping, of the hard bargain that Herman Ranck had forced a desperate boy to make. The hard path was marked to her by gleaming mile-stones, the grey face of Florence Cheatle, the hungry questionings of Dexter Carey.

She fought between the two paths all that night—it was the one great battle of her sheltered life. She veered this way, she swung that. Finally her decision was set. The generations of good, that had gone toward making her, asserted themselves. She rose calmly and hung the notice in its place over the switchboard. She lifted her tear-filled eyes and read it—syllable upon syllable.

"I don't care if Herman Ranck sends me to prison for the rest of my life," she said—and then she broke into an uncontrollable fit of weeping.

In the morning, after the two day operators had come on duty, she stole around to Florence Cheatle's house and there she told her secret. A little later she scurried up to the railroad depot and sent a message to Somerset. To her other prison offense, she added forgery, for she wired: "Come to me. I know of the compact. If you do not come to me, I shall

go to you." And to it she signed the name of the girl who was just coming into her happiness. But she did not care—not Sadie. She had chosen her path—the hard one.

That evening as she went to work, she went out of her way to walk past Florence Cheatle's house. Two figures that



Two figures sat on the step

sat on the step did not see her as she quickly passed in the shadow of the trees. There were two figures there and that was all that Sadie cared. One of the figures was not Herman Ranck, for Sadie passed the supervisor down by the Eagle Hotel. Her gaze went boldly up to his. She was not afraid of him. For in her better sense she very well knew that the supervisor would never dare to lift his finger against her.



Earl sprang forward and hurried it

## The Acknowledging of Earl

BY FRANCES A. LUDWIG

Author of "Blinkey's Homer," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY B. CORY KILVERT

**W**'Y-e-e-e, E-a-r-l-l-l-l!"

The exclamation came from the throats of a half-dozen boys. Indignant expostulation, pained reproach, saint-like resignation and exasperated finality, were all combined in the tenor of the various utterances.

The victim stood at bay. Freckled, shock-headed, and painfully slight of build, his broad forehead, eager eyes, and quivering mouth marked him as of a different mould from the hardened little rebrobates who were baiting him.

Stumper, as ring-leader and spokesman, continued:

"Of course he'll deny it. But we seen him, Bugs an' me an' Blink—didn't we, Blink? It was right by de second elevator—that little errand girl from d' dress-makin' rooms—de one wit' de curly hair. He kissed her t'ree times an'—"

"It's a lie!" The body of the boy, Earl, shook with excitement and his fragile fingers clenched and unclenched in the passion of his resentment. "You know it's a lie! I never did any such thing! I never did any such thing! I don't even know her!"

To him, the impeachment was a tragedy; his tormentors would have made it an occasion for swagger, and for an attitude of justifiable pride. He could not understand their point of view and was devoid of a sense of humor. They could not comprehend his nature and possessed a sense of humor—perverted though it may have been. So Stumper lazily dabbed some paste on a recalcitrant label and as there had been a dearth of enlivening incident that afternoon, began again.

"Dere's one t'ing I've always been pertic'lar about an' dat's de *moral* standing

of de bunch down here." (Stumper's linguistic ability was considerable, and was, if he desired, free from any taint of dialect; but now he was speaking to his henchmen on their native heath).

"Stan's t' reason," he continued virtuously, "dat if Earl'll do such a clan-des-tine t'ing as to kiss a girl t'ree times wit'-out stoppin,' w'y, w'y—first t'ing we know he'll commit some *crime*—like smokin' a cigaroot;" and Stumper winked prodigiously at Isabel, who was sitting at her desk, listening.

The inconsistency of the irony of this sally by such a person in such surroundings penetrated even Earl's understanding. He essayed a smile of scornful superiority—an attempt to show that he was invulnerable to such a far-fetched attack. But it was a failure, as always; there was not a relaxing flicker in the seriousness of the faces around him.

"An' first t'ing y' know," pursued Stumper—"y' never *can* tell w're such t'ings will lead to—he might come to such a t'ing as drinkin' *beer*"—there was a faint snicker from Bugs Wilson but Stumper eyed him severely and he subsided—"an' den, de reputation of de bunch would be—*ru-ined*!"

"Oh, do go along and shut up," said Isabel, impatiently. "Why don't you take somebody of your size, Stumper?"

"Dey wouldn't stan' fer it," replied Stumper with great good humor. "Would dey, Earlie, de-e-ar?"

"You let me alone!" cried the boy, quivering again. "I hate you, you big bully, you great big coward!"

The look of good-natured railery faded from Stumper's face; he drew his brows together threateningly and made a pass at the youngster, who retreated until he was back of Isabel's chair—safe territory. The girl rose and peremptorily bade Stumper be about his business, threatening to call the attention of the shipping-clerk unless he obeyed. Then she turned and addressed the inefficient Earl, half-contemptuously:

"What makes you such a baby? Let on you don't care and they'd soon quit."

There was a good deal of primitive instinct in Isabel. She had not yet learned tolerance for weakness in any form, and

her attitude was one of irritation, rather than sympathy. The child's shoulders heaved; his face jerked and he stumbled over to a corner of the wall and tried to hide his sobs with his folded arms.

"Oh, for mercy sakes!" Down in her heart the girl was the least bit ashamed. She knew that she ought not to feel such kinship with the boy's tormentors; her conscience told her that they were wrong.

"Come here and take my handkerchief. Now go wash your face and don't let them see you cry—they'll only make it harder for you. *Can't* you learn not to mind 'em?"

"It—don't make—any difference." The boy's tones were muffled and broken. "When I act like I don't care they know I do—and they keep it up just the same. They do—don't any of them like me—and I don't know why!" The last words were a wail.

Isabel bit the ends of her fingers meditatively. "It aint because they don't like you," she said. "If you were big enough to lick Stumper, it'd be all right."

"I'm as tall as Spike Halsey," flashed the boy, dropping his arms from his tear-stained face. "And Blinkey McBride aint much bigger than me, neither."

Isabel continued thoughtful. "It aint that," she conceded. "The boys are all right when you're one of them—but you're different, somehow. You don't belong. I'm going to ask to have you taken out of here. Don't cry any more now—try not to care."

Wearily, Earl returned to his place. He attracted no attention, for Stumper was providentially busy, and the machinery of the great establishment went on, with nothing to mark this little hitch among many thousand others.

Standing at the long table, sorting the packages dumped before him into their two great classifications of "charge" and "cash," the heart of the boy was filled with bitterness and his head ached and throbbed with the mystery of it all. Ever since the day that his mother's delicate, boarding-school signature on his *age certificate* had testified to the fact of his fourteen years, it had been the same.

He was small, he knew, hardly larger than the average child of ten, but Spike

Halsey's head came only midway to the top of the loaded truck—the manipulation of which was his laborious duty—and Spike had social recognition and standing equal to any. To be sure, it was his proud boast that he had once spent a night in a cell at a police station; but careful investigation discovered that it had been a case of mistaken identity—which fact a perfectly respectable and wild-eyed parent (concrete worker, by trade) had established without any difficulty the following morning.

Blinkey McBride, taciturn philosopher that he was, was no "scrapper." He even went to the length of recommending diplomacy in preference to fist-cuffs for settling the average difficulty. The former method, he declared, attracted no attention from those in authority, involved neither ruined uniforms, battered features, nor partisanship. Yet Blinkey was not discredited; on the contrary, he was heard with deference and respect.

Earl could not understand it. He had tried so hard to meet their standards. When he carefully imitated their speech, a certain inherited purity of accent called forth their derisive laughter. And when he didn't, when he spoke as the breeding of his forbears decreed he should, they took umbrage, and mimicked and mocked him—called him, "Earlie, dear," "sweetheart," and "girlie." And when he had tried, manfully, to gain their esteem by finishing off a "butts" in the alley, in approved, nonchalant fashion, was it his fault that the resultant nausea and vertigo had necessitated his absence for the rest of the day? Tears stood in his eyes as he remembered the humiliation of that afternoon. He had done his best; one can but try.

He realized, now, what had not dawned upon him in the beginning, the error he had made in confidently trusting Bugs Wilson with his real name. If only he had been inspired to say Bill Jones, or words with similar lack of euphony. Earl Courteney de Crevecoeur Markham was a handicap against which he could never hope to win.

And yet—Stumper's name was Perci-

val Dominick Crowninshield—and no one ever thought of holding it against him.

He wanted them to like him; he had tried so hard to endure their crass jests and robust humor. But they would not treat him as an equal—there was the sting. He could not complain of mishandling; indeed, their horse-play among themselves was of far more strenuous character than they employed with him. That was it: they were always so careful not to hurt him; even their jests were modified to suit his size and understanding—and this was so much added humiliation. Rather would he have fought, and his fists itched at times to strike and pound and claw and scratch and batter. But Stumper had passed the word that no one should touch him in violence—and they would not let him strike; they merely held his arms and laughed.

He boiled with futile rage as he thought of it. And yet, deeper than this, was the longing to be understood, the craving for fellowship; for, beneath their unpromising exteriors they possessed qualities that kindled him; they were men!

He resolved, anew, that he would be social. He would take Isabel's advice; he would not mind them. It was the only way.

The approaching busy season gave Stumper's effervescent brain less need of outlet, so Earl was left in comparative peace. In a few light skirmishes with the lesser minds he came off victor. His muscular work indoors and the brisk autumn air, nights and mornings, gave him a slight gain in weight and life began to assume a tint more rosy.

The wonders in the gilt-and-sparkling shop windows attracted him; he was only a



Earl



little boy after all. One particularly gorgeous display of dolls and toys held him entranced. Noon after noon, when he had gulped down his luncheon, he spent the remainder of his time gazing at them. He had no brothers or sisters and with all his lonesome heart he longed for companionship—sewing made one's mother so tired by night-time. If he had a sister, he might buy her, perhaps, the least of these dolls—and—and—though he knew the shameful weakness of his desire—he, too, might stroke its silky curls and smooth down its skirts. It was standing thus in rapt abstraction that Stumper beheld him—and chuckled. He had had an idea.

That afternoon, Stumper took from his coat-pocket a package and gravely presented it to Earl with the compliments of the "bunch." The boy took it doubtfully, but Stumper's mien was so gracious and his smile so disarming that he had no choice but to open it before them all.

Inside was a doll, a baby doll, with long white skirts and flaxen hair.

Earl flushed to the roots of his own,



"Can't you learn not to mind 'em?"

but quickly he thought of a way of escape. "I haven't any sister, Stumper. Did you think I had?"

"I knew you hadn't," beamed Stumper, "an' so you wouldn't have one to play wit'. I saw y' watchin' 'em. Ye wanter be careful an' not stick yerself on de pins. Here, I'll show you," and snatching the doll, he proceeded to divest it of its outer garment.

"Dis here goes on last—an' den d' skirts,"—Stumper was suiting his actions to his words—"an' den d'—"

Earl sprang forward, grabbed the doll and hurled it across the room; its head went smash against a wooden pillar.

"Hold on, dat's no way t' treat a present, is it, fellers?" A chorus of exaggeratedly reproachful negatives answered. "Here's Earl gone an' smashed his pretty dolly—all t'roo temper, an' he's goin'—t' get w'at"—Stumper's words were jerky for he was trying to force the struggling boy to a recumbent position across his knees—"bad little boys get, w'en dey breaks der nice toys: so!"

With one sturdy leg and arm he pinned Earl down; then he proceeded, leisurely, to administer a form of chastisement intimately associated with the years of one's babyhood.

"Now," said Stumper, severely, as he released his victim, "go an' pick up yer dolly an' bring it here."

Choking with rage and humiliation, the child stumbled to his feet, grasped the iron paste pot with its heavy, welded bottom, and flung it straight at his tormentor. It struck square in the middle of Stumper's forehead, and he went down like an ox beneath the hammer.

There was a gasp, then a concerted rush for the daring rebel; but Stumper had risen to his feet and was holding up, weakly, a detaining hand.

"Let him alone, fellers. Let the little fyste alone. Let him alone—fer good."

Stumper was born to command; the others obeyed. Forthwith Earl was sent to Coventry, except for such communication as the occasion of their mutual employment demanded. At first, he was glad; it meant the cessation of a thousand little indignities. But later, being of a volatile nature that harbored no re-

sentment, he began to long for some personal touch again.

It seemed to him that his punishment was entirely out of proportion to his offense. No matter how much they fought among themselves, another day always found the worst battered combatants resuming amicable relations, as a matter of course. So he began making little overtures to them; tried, nervously, to join in their conversation; went so far as to offer shares of his luncheon when the customary noon-hour division was being made.

It was useless. They regarded his timid attempts at reconciliation with stony disfavor; curtly refused the most tempting tid-bit in his dinner-pail; talked, in his presence, around, above and below him, as if he were so much thin air. It was as Stumper had said, "fer good."

Bitterly Earl regretted his rash rebellion. Gladly would he have gone back to the old warring skirmishes and contention; this present ostracism was far harder to bear. But he gave up trying after a while and his round eyes lost a good deal of their eagerness, and the corners of his mouth drooped in company with his tired-looking little shoulders. He stood all day at his place, occasionally leaning back, cross-legged, his hands hanging listlessly at his sides. Looking, as though through a kaleidoscope, down the passage way that led into the store, he could see the busy shoppers passing and repassing: this was his relaxation.

Isabel, watching his pathetic little figure one afternoon, grew vaguely troubled, and went to Jackson, the shipping-clerk.

"I wish you'd take Earl out of here, Bob; put him upstairs."

"What for?" he asked.

"Why, none of the boys will have anything to do with him," she explained. "I'm sorry for the poor kid. He just stands there all day long and not a word said to him. It's a shame."

Jackson chuckled heartlessly. "Blame good thing," he opined. "Wont do any soldierin', then. Wish they were all like him!" So Isabel's plea was futile.

The boy grew thinner, paler, more drooping. The season wore on. The ship-

ping-room became the scene of wild activities and there was no time to waste on altruistic sympathy. The slogan of the place was "hustle."

Jackson watched Earl's one-sided struggle with an avalanche of packages one bargain Friday, and nodded to Bugs Wilson.

"Help him here a while. Don't let him get stuck. Maybe it'll take the two of you."

"Aw, I c'n do it alone," scoffed Bugs. "He's on'y half a guy, anyhow."

"Can you?" Jackson was thoughtful.

"Well, try it once. Let me see what you can do."

Earl heard him. If Bugs could work faster than he—and he knew Bugs could—it meant one thing, only. Who wanted a weakling?

He allowed himself no lagging the rest of the day, even though he knew that Jackson would attribute the cleared table to Bugs. That astute youngster knew it also—and made the afternoon the occasion for a prolonged siesta, broken only when the shipping-clerk chanced his way.

Six o'clock came, and with it, a lull. The store began to empty. At every counter stood a few belated shoppers impatiently waiting the return of change or the wrapping of a parcel. More tired than he had ever been, Earl leaned up against his table. Spike Halsey was slow with the last truck-load, always a prodigious one; for, after it, any straggling package must be carried to the shipping-room by clerk or inspector in person.

Down the aisle tripped a tiny, chubby girl. She had evidently strayed from her bargain-hunting nurse or mother and had started an investigating tour of her own. She paused at the top of the incline behind Earl, her eyes wide with astonishment at the huge room before her—its sizzling arc lights, noise, motion and confusion. Earl saw her.

"Are you lost, baby?" he inquired. "Where's your mamma?"

She poked one tiny digit in her mouth and surveyed him mutely.

"You'd better come here by me." Earl went up to her. "Don't you know where your mamma is?"

She held up her arms to him with baby trust. "T'weeza buy pitty pink det' for Marzhie," she confided.

"That's fine! But you'd better sit on my stool until your mamma comes. You might get hurt here."

He carried her to his seat, then looked again for Spike. He was not in sight.

Softly, Earl stroked the little girl's curls. She was a very fairylike baby, and he mentally likened her to the doll in the outside show-case—the big one, with the diadem, scepter and iridescent wings.

He looked again; no sign of Spike; then he carefully extricated from a secret cranny the doll that had been the cause of his undoing; and which, save for an orifice in its head, was as attractive as ever.

The baby grabbed it with gurgles of delight, slipped from her stool, laid the doll across it, and began immediately to remove its clothes. Earl watched her, smiling, absorbed in her pleasure and her prettiness.

Spike's truck-load of packages approached slowly, the load over which he, the propelling force, was not tall enough to see; a woman hurried with fleet steps behind him, calling—"Marjorie, Marjorie; Oh, Marjorie!"

Spike, with bent head and straining muscles, pushed steadily on, heeding nothing. The baby heard her name and darted a few steps forward, standing in the middle of the incline; at that same moment the massive, towering truck trembled on its brink.

It was over quickly. The baby lay, a stunned, crumpled heap against the wall on the other side of the incline—Earl's frenzied rush had not been gentle; but he, himself, lay prone and very still; he had been the merest fraction of a second too slow.

Bugs reached the children first, with Stumper a close second. Always a squire of dames, Bugs picked up the now wailing baby, soothed her and found she was unhurt. But it was Stumper who jerked Bob Jackson back as the shipping-clerk bent over Earl, crying shrilly:

"Don't ye touch him, Bob! Don't ye darst to touch him; don't y' see his legs is broke?"

"You're right," muttered Jackson, as he straightened up.

"Bugs," went on Stumper, in full command, "give de kid to de lady wot's havin' hysterics out 'n de aisle, an' get some water an' a rag—quick! Blink, you chase fer a doctor—never mind telephonin'—it's after office hours, y' chump. Spike, gimme yer coat here, den get some whisky—I don't *know* w'ere—*get* it!"

With infinite gentleness, Stumper wedged the coat between the floor and the head of the unconscious boy, covering him then with his own. Jackson, meanwhile, resumed his authority and issued orders.

"All the rest of you guys duck—we don't need you! Hurry now." He turned to Stumper. "They'll be pilin' through here on their way out in a minute. They'll step on him."

"Block up de passage wit' packin' boxes," advised Stumper. "Let'm use de alley doors." He bent over Earl, gently laving his face and hands, watching his face keenly. He muttered, as he did so—"If Spike don't hustle dat booze here double quick I'd hate t' be Spike."

"What hospital?" asked Isabel.

"De Shoreham," answered Stumper.

"Why that's a *swell* hospital! How did they come to—"

"Betcha anyt'ing," broke in Bugs, "betcha anyt'ing dat it'll be just like it is in de books. Betcha dat kid'll be some rich man's on'y child an' he'll get married wit' Earl's mudder, probl'y findin' out dey went t' school t'gedder er some-thin' an' Earl'll have—"

"Aw, tie it up; cheese it; cut it out; go an' fali down de elevator shaft," vociferated Stumper. "Bugs, dem w'eels of yours—"

"Tell me all about it," commanded Isabel. "Everything."

"If it hadn't 'a' been fer me it wouldn't 'a' been no Shoreham hospital," asserted Stumper. "Dat fe-male dat was wit' d' kid—it was a nurse-girl, just as I said—she got out o' here wit'out sayin' fare-well er leavin' any address. I s'pose she's scared she'd lose her job. But w'en d' doctör got t'roo patchin' Earl up, Earl he remembered dat de baby's name was Mar-

jorie an' she said de nurse had bought her a pink dress. We looked, Bob an' I, an' sure enough, in one of de last packages dat come in dere was a little pink dress—an' de name on it was 'Dixon' wit' a nort' side address.

"D'rest was easy. I called up de party—I found 'em in d' telephone d'rectory—an' sure enough, dey had a kid named Marjorie an' a nurse-girl, bot' answerin' description. Result: much gratitude—an' de Shoreham, 'stid o' de County!" Stumper flipped three parcels into three separate bins with one turn of his wrist, the while he clapped his other hand over Bugs' mouth, stretched, through excitement, to its widest capacity.

"You lemme alone!" Bugs squirmed from Stumper's grasp. "I say it is accordin' to d' books. It's all happened as straight as a string. Now all dat's left is to have Earl get well an' de two families united, an' den Earl'll be all kinds of a swell an'—"

"Bugs,"—Bob Jackson's voice came from the further end of the shipping - room, "when you're through restin', come here."

At noon-time, Stumper pursued the subject further with Isabel, who had just remarked:

"How did you ever come to think of looking those folks up that way, Stumper?"

Stumper hesitated. "Because, because—well, Earl didn't get a square deal down here—an' it was mostly my fault, I guess. I t'ought I'd do what I could—t' make it right." He was silent a minute, then: "I wish't dere was somethin' else, too, dat I c'd do. White—wasn't it, Miss

Cartwright? What he did. I never seen a whiter t'ing."

"Aw, g'wan," interpolated Bugs, who caught the last sentence. "D'ere aint a guy in dis room wouldn't done de same."

"That's true." Stumper spoke with precision, being moved. "But there aint a guy in this room as thin an' spindlin' an' babyfied as Earl, nor one that's been bullyragged like he has, either—so I say it was an extry white thing for him to do."

Bugs was silent.

"Why don't you go to see him?" suggested Isabel.



It struck square in Stumper's forehead

Stumper looked doubtful. "Do you t'ink dey'd let me?" he temporized.

Bugs fairly bulged with his superior information. "W'y of course. W'en folks is in hospitals dey have de time of der lives. Fancy grub t' eat an' people bring 'em flowers an' fruit an' all sorts of t'ings."

"That would be lovely," said Isabel. "Suppose you boys go to see him Sunday and take him some flowers. Laurene and I are going

up there to-night, and we'll take him some fruit and we'll tell him you're coming."

Stumper was silent. On the face of it, the proposition was a simple thing—but it had its subtleties.

Isabel, craftily, swung the decision.

"Of course I know flowers are terrible expensive this time of year, but if you'd all chip in a little it wouldn't be—"

Stumper reddened. "You don't suppose I give a whoop what they cost, do you? All right"—recklessly. "We oughta do it. We'll all go up to see him



Sunday, an' I'll put up for the flowers."

Blinky McBride and Spike Halsey, returning from their nooning, heard the declaration and paused to ascertain its import.

"We're goin'," said Stumper, not looking at Bugs, "d' bunch is goin' t' see Earl Sunday afternoon—an' take him some flowers."

Spike and Blinky looked aghast. "But de game," they cried with one voice. "De final game! Sunday settles de score!"

"Hully chee, I forgot!" Stumper was all contrition, but his mouth was firm. "But ye'll have t' tell de Pirates it's off. Let 'em have d' champeenship. Supposin' 'twas one o' de bunch! You know he's got it comin' to him—an' more."

They moved thoughtfully away, each to his separate corner. Finally Blinky voiced the thought that had been troubling them all: the crux, the crucial point of Isabel's simple proposition.

"Who's goin' t' carry de flowers?"

"Bugs," responded Stumper firmly. "Bugs'll carry de flowers."

"W'y?" began that individual indignantly. "W'y have I got to be d' goat—"

"Who was it made de crack about 'em?" Stumper

turned on him fiercely. "If you hadn't 'a' been so fresh to pass out information, I wouldn't 'a' got let in fer it. It's Bugs' fault, fellers; Bugs carries d' flowers."

"I'll put 'em under my coat," muttered Bugs.

"An' have 'em smashed. Y' will not! You'll take 'em in yer hand—tisher paper an' all, like a little man—an' dat's about enough from you, see?"

Bugs saw.

The hospital superintendent looked up and smiled, almost audibly, as the visiting boys filed into her office. How could she know the excessive pains that had

been taken with each toilet—even though the visible results came not up to conventional standards.

To wear one's uniform on state occasions, though that uniform be of broadcloth, well-tailored and brass-buttoned, was a thing not to be considered until every other expedient had failed. Stumper was the only one who boasted coat and trousers of like material; his derby (bor-

rowed) rested jauntily upon his ears; his neck was encircled by the highest collar that money could buy—but one absorbed these details later, for a large, puff tie of a brilliant shade of purple clamored for first attention.

The superintendent wondered why the boy next in line so persistently held his right hand behind his back. His coat was so large that it threatened to slip from his sloping shoulders, and his collar was the exact opposite of Stumper's, being a turned-over, Byronic roll. The third visitor's jacket was so extremely short and tight that the red stripes adorning the seams of his trousers appeared to start just under his arms—Spike had been obliged to wear part of his uniform. Blinky, who owned none, was the same colorless atom of week days, save

that his bushy hair was slicked down on either side of a geometrically exact part, and shone like glass—a result achieved only by hard exertion and the lavish use of perfumed soap.

Stumper suddenly remembered his derby, snatched it off, blushed and spoke.

"Have you got a guy here—I mean have you a little boy here named Earl—Earl Mark—"

"Courteney de Crevecoeur Markham," prompted Bugs.

Stumper jabbed back hard with one elbow and Bugs retreated, hastily and without grace.

"A boy named Earl Markham who



Choking with rage

had both his legs broken Friday night, down at Barnhardt and Sons," continued Stumper. "We'd like to see him a little while if we could, please, ma'am."

The superintendent shook her head with a gesture of denial. "I'm sorry to disappoint you," she said, "but I'm afraid not. The boy was badly hurt and must be kept very quiet, especially at this time. His mother has been with him, but no one else. Perhaps in a week or ten—"

She paused. The faces before her reflected a disappointment, so sudden and so poignant that it was almost startling.

Stumper struggled for a full minute with his voice and his high collar, before he managed to articulate, huskily:

"But—but, you see lady—ma'am, this aint exactly what you'd call an—an *ordinary* occasion."

The superintendent's mouth twitched slightly. "No?" she encouraged.

"No'm. Y' see, this here Earl, this little boy, he aint been gettin' what you'd call a square deal—that is we fellers here—we fellers here have been rubbin' it into him pretty strong. And when he did—*what* he did, we fellers here, we thought we'd like to see him and tell him—and let him know, somehow, that we wished we—that we didn't mean—that we—" Stumper floundered hopelessly.

The superintendent was a lady of penetration. "I think I understand," she said gently.

"An' dat aint all, lady." Blinkey's voice quivered and his gargoyle-like little face worked with rare emotion. "We called off de game, d' final game dat would have settled de champeenship between de Pirates an' de Invincibles, so't we c'd come an'—an' square ourselves wit' Earl!"

The superintendent liked boys. She pressed a button on her desk. "Please have Miss Twitchell in twenty-six come to the office," she directed.

"I'll see what his nurse thinks," she said to the waiting company.

The nurse summoned entered the office. She glanced at the boys and commenced eagerly, "Oh—" then lowered her voice and conversed for several minutes with the superintendent in an undertone.

The superintendent smiled at the wait-

ing visitors. "It's all right. Miss Twitchell says a message came to the little fellow last night—some young ladies left it and some other things—to the effect that you were coming. He has asked for news of you so many times to-day that Miss Twitchell dreads to disappoint him; she thinks it would do him more harm than your visit. So—for ten minutes, only—and as quiet as possible."

Such a spotless Earl as greeted them! Such a wraith of a boy with even the freckles blanched to a pale lemon color. It came to Stumper that he had seen this boy day after day, but had never before noticed how small he was; it had taken the contrast of the white pillows to bring his cruelty home to him. A lump came into his throat and he could not speak.

But Bugs was not so troubled. With a gusty sigh of relief, he brought forward his stiffened arm and laid down the flowers he had been concealing. Earl's fingers tore at the tissue wrapping. They covered a bunch of pink roses. "Oh, how pret—how bully!" he cried. "They're dandy, perfectly fine! Who sent them?"

"Stumper," began Bugs—but then Stumper found his voice. "De girls," he asserted. "Isabel an' de rest of 'em. She couldn't get 'em in time las' night, so Bugs"—a tremendous scowl at the individual named—"y' know how fierce Bugs is t' be always doin' somethin' fer a bunch o' skirts—Bugs, he brought 'em."

"They're just fine," murmured Earl again. "I'm so much obliged. How's—how's everything?"

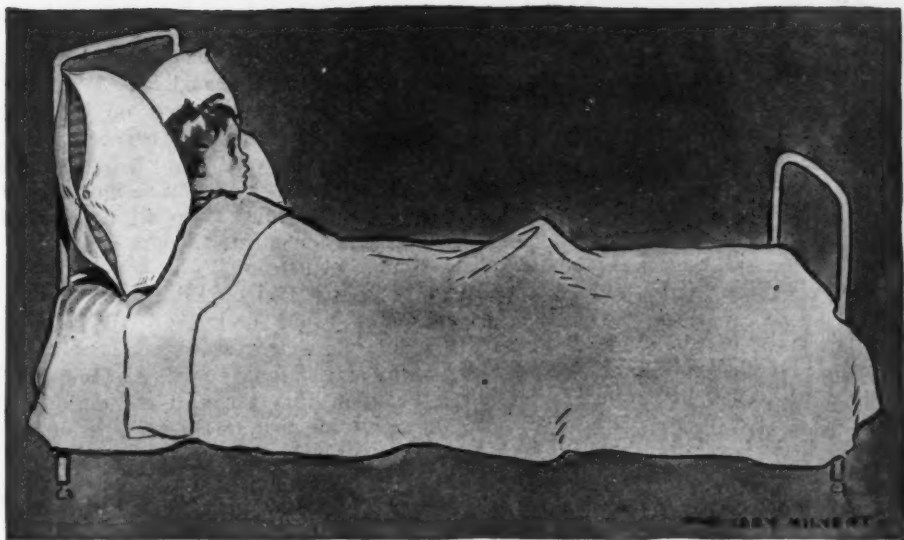
It was complete forgiveness, a noble attempt to ignore the past, and Stumper rose to the occasion.

"Fine," he declared. "Only Bugs had hard work runnin' your place alone. Bob says he hopes you'll get well quick, fer we're short-handed."

Earl smiled wistfully. "Do you suppose they'll save my place for me? The rush'll all be over when I'm able to work again."

"Do I!" exploded Stumper. "After you risked yer life t'—yes. They'll save yer place—don't worry!"

Blinkey came forward, and in his quiet manner contributed his share. "Y' must



Such a spotless Earl as greeted them!

lie low till yer all fast t'gedder, Earl. We're goin' t' make some changes in de nine nex' year an' I'll see 'at y' get a chance at de bat."

Blinkey was captain of the Invincibles. Earl had never dared to hope for such an honor; its magnitude left him dumb.

Spike Halsey grasped the hurt child's hand in his own broad fist. "I'm sorry I didn't see y' in time w'en I was pushin' d' truck, Earl," he said. "But I'm a t'ousan' times obliged to y' fer not lettin' me kill de baby—dis here is bad enough."

"It wasn't your fault," cried Earl. "You couldn't help it—you couldn't see."

Bugs, who was twisting with impatient curiosity, broke in:

"Chee, but yer in luck t' have a place like dis t' be sick in. Was de kid an only child?"

Earl looked puzzled. Ignoring Stumper's look of disapproval, Bugs explained:

"I mean de kiddie; de little one dat ye pushed out o' de way."

"An only child? Why, no. But they think lots of her for she's the baby. There's five older than her; Dr. Dixon told me himself."

"Doctor Dixon?"

"Yes, didn't you know? He's Dr.

Dixon, the little girl's father, and this is the hospital where he sends his patients—that's how I got here. He's taking care of me himself."

"An' he aint no millionaire—nor nothin'—ncr—nor—"

Earl laughed. "I don't think he's very rich—but I guess he's a good doctor. He's been good to me."

"Well, he might be," muttered Stumper. But Bugs' face was tragic in its disappointment.

"Den you don't get nuttin' out o' dis—no adoptin'; no goin' t' college; none o' de t'ings you read about?"

Earl flushed. "He's taking care of me—and it isn't costing me anything—and they'll give my mother sewing. With so many children they can keep her busy all the time."

Bugs was almost in tears. "Den dere aint no chanst fer yer mudder t' get mar—"

One of Stumper's capable hands was over the speaker's mouth, and the other, equally capable, took a firm grip on his coat collar; Bugs was dragged from the vicinity of Earl's bed.

"If you open yer loony face again," hissed Stumper, "I'll drop yer down t'ree stories outer dat dere winder. Aint dere

no brains in dat cu-palo of yours at all?"

The nurse approached. "Your time is up," she said. "You must say good-by now and come again some time."

A series of hearty but gentle handshakes, a chorus of—"Good-by, Earl; keep a stiff upper lip!" "Good-by, old sport, you'll fergit this in a mont'!" "Good-luck, old boy, de bunch'll miss you!" and "Hurry an' get well so's we can lick de spots off de Pirates nex' summer!"—and they were gone. Only Bugs Wilson lingered a minute, to whisper:

"D' girls *didn't* send d' flowers; Stumper bought 'em himself!" And with a soul at peace, he ambled after the others.

The little boy lay quite still, looking at the roses with shining eyes.

The nurse, with whom his patience and gentle ways had made him a favorite, approached.

"Are you tired?" she asked, a trifle anxiously. "We must keep real still, you know."

"Oh, no, ma'am," he answered eagerly. "I *wanted* to see them."

She placed her fingers on his wrist and with her other hand smoothed back his tumbled hair.

"I'm glad it gave you so much pleasure, but you must sleep all you can to-night. They mustn't come again until you are real strong."

"Yes'm," said Earl dutifully.

What could she know of the delicious exhilaration that was making his eyes shine and his pulse quicken? How could she know that the visit she deprecated was a tonic that would bring healing to his shattered limbs and strength to his worn body more quickly than all the expert care and nursing in the world? He was no longer an alien—he "belonged!"



"Chee, but yer in luck t' have a place like this t' be sick in!"



# Whitelaw of The Arctic

## The Story of a Heaven Shaman

BY ALVAH MILTON KERR

Author of "The Way of Wrath," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY GAYLE HOSKINS

FROM the beginning, Aram Whitelaw's destiny was, no doubt, written in his nature. Each man, in strict truth, being his own Book of Fate, Whitelaw perhaps only turned the leaves of his sympathetic self to an inevitable end. From childhood he had been oddly dual, fiercely impatient and strangely tender. He had fought more than one bloody fight in boyhood, only to reap through victory an abasing sense of sorrow and disgust instead of elation. When he became a doctor, his artisanry in mending human anatomies owed its success chiefly to the passion of sympathy that directed it. The look of him argued this. His shapely yet powerful body, six feet three inches in height, lifted itself so above common men, so bent itself forward at the shoulders as from constant seeking, was crowned with a head so expressive of visions unknown to meaty persons—that one knew infallibly he must suffer did he not serve those in suffering.

It was this cast of nature which, at the end of two years of "medicine," carried him into the ministry. Curiously, he averred that as a physician he had discovered that sin was, for the most part, the cause of ill health. Spiritual teaching, he thought, might help to cut away the cause. After that, until he was thirty-three he lived in the joy of "going about doing good;" then he met the Pretty Person, and that which had been glory and rapture in him gave way to fire of a different sort. Where his heart before had diffused abroad a glow that reached toward every human being, it now centered its light in a pointed blaze upon a single creature.

He was aware that, in deepest truth,

disaster had come upon him—that the inexorable hunger of the physical had overwhelmed the spiritually compassionate in him; but he went with the tide, helpless as an insect and—helpless as a man in love. Strangely, the miserable, the sinful, now seemed to him wholly unlovely and not worth saving. But the Pretty Person! How entirely lovely she seemed, how immeasurably worth serving and saving! The perfume of her hair, the turn of her chin, the blue of her eyes, the roundness of her body, surely these were not with her as with any other woman that ever lived, but far finer. To him the shallowness of her soul, the selfishness of her aims, were only faintly perceived, like something muffled and softened in a rosy fog.

But the final question springing of their relation was difficult of answer. She would not be a simple preacher's wife. Could one so beautiful as she accept a station that verged on actual poverty, for the sake of marriage? His worship of her was, indeed, agreeable incense, but the shrine of its continuance would have so poor a setting. He must win wealth that she might dwell in fitting and pleasurable state. That was the achievement she finally set him as her price. Though to him this decision at first seemed selfish and hard, it came ere long to seem just and reasonable. She seemed to him a gem worthy only of a golden setting. Because the doing of good to the many had become a smothered impulse in him, he saw his future empty unless he could build the temple demanded by his idol. So, filled with splendid expectations, he at last set forth from her, leaving behind him his great

spiritual dream, and seeking a land of seeming infinitudes of frost, of mountains and streams where suffering stalked imperious and men wrestled with pain and death for gold.

But almost with the beginning of his severance from her, his numbed spiritual nature began to prickle and stir again, groping toward expression. As the ship that bore him came out the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and took its enchanted way northward by that inner route to Alaska which brings a man face to face with God's most tremendous things, a vague shame for the selfishness and smallness of his mission began to creep upon him. He could not tell precisely why it was, but the mountain tops, swimming white and wonderful in the sky, began to send disturbing whispers to him; the waves that ran away in blue flocks among the green islands sometimes seemed to laugh back to him in covert derision; the dawns that came down from the mountain-chains in bewildering loveliness, and the sunsets that gathered upon the waters like the poured dyes of all the flowers that ever grew, began to bring him qualms of uneasiness.

Then one day as they sailed, thronged about with beauty that was terrible in its sublimity, a fellow passenger told him of William Duncan, the immortal friend of the Tsimshians, the man who so loved the poor tribes of the frost-lands that he spent his life lifting them from savagery. Then, upon another day, the voyagers came to Annette Island, to the Utopian community of Metlakatla, the seat of Duncan's work of self-sacrifice and love, and here Whitelaw saw a town shining against a dark hill, with a church and school and many civilizing industries, and a happy citizenry of native Alaskan Indians who once had been hideously poor and barbarous. That which he saw and heard there went with him northward, haunting him.

Finally the ship made Valdez, and scattered its human units toward Tanana, the Yukon, Copper River and Nome. Whitelaw and three companions took the long trail northward for the Black Bottle region, and at the end of June, far up the Blue Muck River, began strug-

gling to wrest from the ground that yellow stuff for which men have been immemorably mad. Life there had a cast primordial—crude, raw, rough, brute-hungered and burrowing. The long, sinewy fingers of Whitelaw presently became faced with skin that was as horn, the stoop of his shoulders deepened, his pale, sensitive face became burned and thin, his eyes narrow and keen from concentration. The spell of expectancy was upon him; day by day the lure of the elusive element that works magic with men and things deadened the faint travail of his tenderer self. The way of his daily life was coarse and primitive; his food and drink were taken with the gusto and lack of nicety common to animals, the place he called home was a kind of lair fashioned of logs and dirt, half sunken in a hillside.

Along the Blue Muck other men were living much as he lived, toiling with the same ferocious fury to reach the wizard stuff that they believed lay below them on the bedrock. Traces of it had been found in the stubborn soil of this upper region; further down toward the sea it had been won from the bedrock in quantities. But the drift of ages that lay along the Blue Muck was deep and gelid; through that they must go to the world-old base of hard pan and work tunnels to and fro. Only the strong, the tough, or the insane, were fit to grapple with the task.

By September Whitelaw was as a wolf-man—gaunt, hard-muscled, stringy, half savage of face and figure. The voices of the Great Love, that which had once been as a rapturous music in him, now were altogether hushed. Even his dream of the Pretty Person seemed a vague, shapeless haze at the bottom of his mind; hunger for the gold itself possessed and filled him, shutting out everything. He seemed to think and have his very life in muck and mud, digging, digging, washing pans of the half-frozen dirt to test it for the precious "dust," and again digging, digging. Every night he built a big fire at the bottom of the well he was sinking, for the downward grip of centuries of frost had to be unlocked; then, after a few hours of sleep, again into the muck of the smoke-blackened hole, dig-

ging and carrying mud up the ladder.

Then one day he came to bed-rock and scraped a bucketful of silt from a fissure; and when he had climbed to the surface and washed the stuff, he stood staring with bated breath at what remained at the bottom of the pan. Unquestionably it was gold-dust—that devil-flour ground between the millstones of titanic strata and squeezed to the surface by æon-old heavings of incalculable volcanic masses. For a little space he stood scraping his fingers through the yellow particles and blinking; then suddenly his blood crackled in his ears, specks floated before his eyes, and he saw the face of the Pretty Person looking at him from the bottom of the pan. Her eyes were swimming with light and laughter, her round cheeks were dimpled, her pink mouth drew toward him, inviting kisses.

He stood up and looked about him. The mountain tops glistened oddly white, a strange luster flickered upon the lifted clots of forest, a distant waterfall shook like dangling chains of silver, and the smile of the Pretty Person glowed in it all. With sight of the gold her image had come back to him, blossoming in his fancy like a miraculous flower, and bringing the old, delicious sense of intoxication. He turned toward the smoke-blackened excavation, laughing wildly.

Her image remained with him through days and nights after that, as he burrowed a tunnel along the bed-rock, scraping the precious silt from the crevices and lugging it in bucketfuls up the ladder and washing it in a rude rocker. Then summer, which had been as a single long day touched with pearly midnights, went out like a dying fire, and the heart-chilling mystery of the Great Cold began to gather in the mountains. Whitelaw toiled like a fiend through another week, almost without sleep and chewing sparingly at the vanishing end of his supplies; then one morning the high mountain-heads were lost in storm and snow-thickened winds sucked through the gulches like roaring torrents of milk. Gaunt, sunken-eyed, long-haired, unshaven, he looked about him. He dared not linger longer, every ele-

ment whispered of peril. He had no furs, kamelayka, parka, mukluks, or other things of that sort, so he swathed sacking about his booted feet and legs, roped his coarse woolen blankets about his body and head, and with his gold tied in a long pouch about his waist, took the trail down the Blue Muck, making eagerly for Black Bottle, sixty miles away.

The next day, with the deepening of darkness, he came to "camp," to Black Bottle, the sinful, the putrescent, the pitiful. A sprawling, conglomerate of huts of stone, tents and dug-outs, and houses half logs and half heaped up dirt, it spread along Blue Muck Gulch, pushing a human lair here and there up against the mountain side like a mud-dauber's nest. Here for a long time had lived nearly a thousand native Alaskans, sustaining life mainly with salmon from the Blue Muck River, though this food supply had now been destroyed by mining débris in the stream. Here and there in front of the poor dwellings totem poles still lifted their cabalistic carvings grotesquely. But white men had found gold along the little river and had made the village a "camp," building four so-called "hotels" and once again as many saloons and gaming places. The simple aborigines, breasting this "civilization" like swimmers in poisoned waters, had begun at once to sink. Preserved before by the very meagerness of their lives and absence of temptations, they had met the advent of the white man's whisky with no more strength than ignorant children. In five years they had diminished one-third in numbers, so rapidly had the diseases, moral and physical, of their lawless neighbors spread among them.

To this town, Whitelaw came from out the storm that night. Tall, muffled, powdered with frost, but steeped in his warm dream of going home to the Pretty Person, he stamped his way noisily into the Blue Muck House. Architecturally the place was a wide two-storied building constructed of logs and boards. The big room into which Whitelaw stepped, contained a drinking-bar, numerous rough tables and chairs, two roulette wheels at one side and a faro outfit in a corner. A half hundred men, Indian and

white, were in the place and every gaming device had full and loud employment. Fumes of tobacco, spilled liquor and wet furs, mingled in a shocking reek. Behind the bar stood the proprietor, a huge, bare-armed, red-faced Swede. He mopped the bar and glanced at the towering apparition before him. Whitelaw pushed the blanket from about his head.

"I'm just in from the North Claims, and am tired and hungry," he said, with a smile. "Could I get a bed and something to eat?"

He threw the long hair back from his gaunt face, and as the light from a big lamp that hung from the ceiling fell over him, he looked as a young John the Baptist might, just back from a long fast in the wilderness. The wolf look was gone from his face now, his eyes glowed with triumph and a tender light. Several of the men, playing cards at the tables, turned at sound of his voice and looked at him curiously. The musical quality of his intonation, the intellectual contour of his head and his unusual height, challenged attention. He was obviously by nature and calling foreign to their brutal world, yet as obviously, a struggler in it. The red-faced Swede slowly mopped the bar, looking at Whitelaw with bloodshot, heavy-lidded eyes.

"Ay ban putty full har," he said. "Yu got any dogs?"

"No, I walked down just as I am. I want to buy some dogs to-morrow and get down to Valdez as soon as I can. I'm going out," replied Whitelaw, again with a smile.

The landlord grunted and considered a moment. "Yu ban doing putty fair up at the Claims, eh?" he insinuated.

"Well, rather better than 'fair,' I suppose. I really have a very wonderful mine there," confessed Whitelaw, his eyes deepening their glow.

"Hah! Gude! Ay tenk Ay set 'em up!" laughed the Swede, placing a tall, black bottle on the bar and a glass beside it. "Dis har is gude stuff. Hit it."

Whitelaw laughed and shook his head. "No, I thank you. I want some real food and a real bed. I don't care much for

whisky, except sometimes as medicine." More of the card players turned and looked intently at the tall man by the bar, and several loungers, who had started toward the place of bottles, stopped short, their bloated faces mirrors of astonishment and regret.

"Gar! Ay tenk yu ban tenderfoot for sure!" asserted the man behind the bar. "Batter hit it once for luck; it's gude."

Whitelaw shook his head, smiling good naturedly. "No, thank you," he said again.

At that a man arose from a near-by table and stepped toward the bar. He was hardly of medium height, but bull-necked and thick of body, and his gait had a rolling swing as if from long adjustment to the motion of ships. He looked up at Whitelaw with a truculent sneer, then took the bottle and filled the glass beside it.

"Another glass, Stockholm," he said. "This here gent will drink with me." His enunciation had the effect of one with a harelip or very heavy cold. Whitelaw looked down at him, at first quizzically, then with undisguised disgust. The man's face was pockmarked, and had a very wide and ugly mouth and a nose that manifestly had at some time been crushed flat. The man addressed as "Stockholm" placed another glass by the bottle.

"Mester," he said, "Ay mak yu introduce to Ratline French. He ban gude friend of mine." The Swede's dull eyes took a livelier glint as from growing excitement. The unsavory shape in front of Whitelaw thrust out a short, thick arm and wide, dirty palm.

"How are ye? We will have a drink together. Folks ginerally irrigate with me fust, here in Stockholm's place," he said brusquely.

Whitelaw straightened slightly but his long arms hung motionless. In his light-brown eyes, flames gathered, not unlike fire kindling in amber. "No, I believe I remarked that I didn't care for any whisky," he said quietly. He turned his eyes to the Swede's face. "I inquired whether or not you could furnish me with something to eat and a bed," he added. "I am awaiting your reply."





"How are ye? We will have a drink together"

"Val, Ay don't know—" began the Swede—whereat the offensive Ratline thrust himself close in front of Whitelaw, leering up at him with brutish eyes. "We will hit the grog first, stranger, if you please," he said. "My invite goes."

"Not with me," said Whitelaw, looking down upon the repulsive face before him. A faint pallor began to gather about his sensitive nostrils. Half the men in the place arose, a few with faces expressing the swift seriousness of fear, but most of them with expressions of pleasurable expectancy. A young Indian with a lithe, quick step, came forward and stood looking watchfully at the group by the bar.

"So, stranger, ye're opposed t' lickerin' with a gentleman, eh?" asked Ratline, doubling his fists menacingly.

"No," smiled Whitelaw. "I might possibly drink with a gentleman, but not with you." Though he smiled, his nostrils quivered and now were spotted white.

"Say, do you know," he went on, "I have never struck a human being since I was a boy, and I don't think I'll begin on such a thing as you, but I have a mind to throw you out of this place."

With a bawling roar of profanity, Ratline tore his greasy deerskin coat open and thrust his hand toward his hip, but Whitelaw's hands flashed out, his long fingers nailing the other's throat in a stifling clutch, and Ratline's braying roar squeaked out in a gasping wheeze. His hand came out with a revolver in it, but the watchful young Indian leaped in and wrung it from his grasp and backed off, his dark eyes gleaming. The big Swede grasped a bungstarter and pounded the bar, shouting for order, but pounded in vain. The man who for love's sake had toiled for three months as never a training athlete toiled, literally lifted Ratline clear of the floor by the neck and shook him. The next moment he bore the offender backward, crushing him ruthlessly through the tumbling chairs and tables toward the entrance. Ratline essayed to strike Whitelaw, but the latter's long arms held him so far away that the struggling man only beat the air.

During the few moments that had

elapsed, a strange stillness had fallen on the others in the place; then Stockholm burst out from behind the bar, bellowing wildly as he ran, but four or five men stepped in front of him, holding him back. With the next moment Ratline was pinned against the wall near the door, his toes scarcely touching the floor. Whitelaw's face was pale, his mouth set, his eyes half closed. He looked straight at the countenance before him—with its out-thrust tongue, its bulging eyes, its flesh purple and puffed to bursting. He held Ratline there through what seemed a hideously long time. The Indian had followed him, and standing at his back, turned with the revolver in his hand and looked defiantly at the others. Stockholm stood pressed back against the bar, panting and open-mouthed. Every other man in the wide room, save the faro dealer, was on his feet, bending forward and gazing at the three by the door; and every man was silent. At length Whitelaw turned his head and caught a glimpse of the young Indian.

"Open the door," he said.

The Indian flung it wide. Then Whitelaw took a step sidewise, and bracing himself with his feet apart, whipped Ratline round as one might who throws the hammer, and hurled him headlong through the entrance. Whitelaw turned back with a deep breath and looked at the Indian.

"Is that his pistol?" he asked. The Indian nodded. Whitelaw took it from him and flung it out after Ratline and closed the door, then walked with flashing eyes back toward the bar.

"Will you please unhand this man," he said, pointing a long finger at Stockholm, "while he answers me if he can give me a bed and something to eat?"

At that, the man dealing faro threw himself back in his chair and smote the rough ceiling with a yell of laughter; suddenly a half dozen rough miners, with boisterous guffaws of mirth, were shaking hands with Whitelaw. Stockholm got in behind the bar hurriedly; then he too, began to laugh nervously and with manifest chagrin.

"Val," he said, "Ay tenk Ay give yu a bed and grub, mester, or yu ban taking

this whole d—d skooting match! The yoke ban on me and Ratline. Yentlemen, wet up on me." He pushed a lot of glasses on the bar beside the bottle and called the young Indian: "Taku, show this har gentleman back and tell the cook Ay said get him a square; then yu put the gentleman in twelve," he added.

Whitelaw followed Taku through a rear door into a severely plain dining room. When he was seated at a table in the light of a lamp, he looked at Taku curiously. "Haven't I seen you before, somewhere?" he inquired.

"I come by your mine in summer, up valley," said the Indian.

"Oh," exclaimed Whitelaw. "I remember! You are working here, now?"

"Yes, I work now," replied Taku rather reluctantly. "Wife in kitchen, wash heap dishes." He looked apprehensively at the door through which they had entered. "Ratline find pistol, I'm 'fraid and come back. Very bad man."

"No," said Whitelaw, "when he recovers consciousness out there in the snow he will go somewhere else. Properly whipped dogs bark and threaten at a distance, sometimes, but they also keep at a distance."

"The *Shaman* is strong, very; but he make safety more if he keep pistol of Ratline," offered Taku respectfully.

"I have a very good one in my clothes," smiled Whitelaw. He looked at Taku a moment. "*Shaman*? What do you mean by *Shaman*?" he asked.

"Medicine Man, big Medicine Man. You told Taku at mine you learn medicine in books once. Taku now see, he now know."

Whitelaw sat a moment mystified. "Oh yes, I see," he laughed. "I must have felt communicative. Did I tell you too, that I had been a minister, a preacher, once?"

"No, I think not so." The Indian hesitated as if Whitelaw's meaning were not quite clear to him. "The *Shaman* mean he been like Father Duncan of Island Annette?"

"Well, a little like him, but not so great, not nearly so great," said Whitelaw, suddenly darkening with shamed regret.

The look of reverent admiration in Taku's face deepened to awe. "I go bring you the best," he said. "I tell cook only the best." He went out into the kitchen, moving quickly but softly.

Later, when Whitelaw had eaten and had followed Taku to the floor above, the young Indian stopped, candle in hand, in the narrow passage and lifted his eyes to the tall man's face. "Taku got little child much sick, up on side of mountain in cabin with Taku's mother," he said. "Think him die, I don't know." He shook his head, his somber eyes full of shadow.

Whitelaw stopped and regarded him with rising interest. "Is that so?" he asked. "Is there no doctor, no '*Shaman*,' as you call them, in this place?"

Taku shook his head again. "No. In summer he been killed by Ratline. He booze heap and gamble and Ratline make quarrel and shoot him in head. Black Bottle now have many, many sick papoose, some big folks, too."

A sigh of pity shook Whitelaw's throat. "I have no medicines, no tools, nothing," he said.

Taku lifted the candle above his head. "Come!" he whispered exultingly. He unlocked the door of "twelve" and they entered. "Look!" he cried. "The dead *Shaman*'s boxes! Inside much bottle, much knife, much things!"

Whitelaw took the candle from him and peered about. There was a bed, a table piled with medical books, two trunks and two handbags such as physicians carry in practice. "Go down and bring me a lamp, if there is one," he said sharply to Taku. "See that man at the bar, the landlord, and get the keys to these things. Tell him I am a doctor and I'm going to see your sick child. If he don't give you the keys tell him I'll come down and get them."

Taku fetched a long breath and the next moment he was going down the dark stair. When he returned he bore an oil lamp and some keys. "Stockholm say use medicines, all, but not come after him," was his comment.

Whitelaw laughed. "You can go, Taku. When I've looked things over I will come down," he said, beginning to

apply the keys. In one case was a set of physician's instruments, in the other filled phials of all sorts, in one of the trunks many larger bottles of drugs, in the other clothing. He closed the last one and locked it again. Through a half hour he pored over the phials with knit brows, then sat for a while looking at the lamp. "Many, many sick children, and I know so little," he sighed. His dream had changed, the picture of the Pretty Person had grown far and dim; in its place a vision of many suffering children. A big wolf-skin coat and parka hung against the wall. He arose and put them on, and taking up the hand-cases, went out quickly. "I'll send to the dead doctor's people the cost of what I use of these things," he said absently.

A half hour later he had climbed the mountain's base to a shack, half buried among the drifts and rocks, and was holding the hot wrist of a delirious child, counting its pulse beats. "It is fever, typhoid, I think," was what he said to Taku. The little sufferer lay on the ground among some ragged blankets and furs, the air was inexpressibly close and foul, the place dim and stifling with smoke from the grease-lamp. There was no warming fire. An old Indian woman, Taku's mother, who once had worn the labret, and whose nether lip was hideous with the scar, watched Whitelaw with beady, questioning eyes. Taku explained in the native tongue that their visitor was a great *Shaman*, whereupon she whimpered and moaned at Whitelaw, her slit lip quivering beseechingly. Taku assured her that the *Shaman* would exorcise the evil spirit which had entered into the child. After Whitelaw had given the little boy a sleeping potion, he sat for a time with his big, cool hand on the child's forehead, and the babbling and tossing died away and sleep crept slowly over the little one. He had proceeded without noise or incantation, and Taku's mother looked her amazement. One decisive thing he did, however; he took up a rifle that rested in a corner and deliberately rammed the steel barrel through the mud-daubed wall on either side of the room.

"The atmosphere is poisonous here; the

child will die if he hasn't pure air," he said to Taku. "We must get some sort of stove in here, with pipe or chimney, to warm and ventilate the place. I'll see about it in the morning. Keep the child covered with the furs."

Taku looked his wonder, and Whitelaw selected some medicine from one of the cases and gave directions, interpreted by Taku, to his mother; then Whitelaw went on: "You said there were a lot of other sick children?"

"Many, and big folks too," said Taku.

"I want you to take me around to see them. Something must be done for this town. You can be my interpreter, change my words into Indian words. I'll need you," said Whitelaw.

"Taku work for Stockholm," was the reply.

"No, you will work for me, I've got plenty of dust and will pay you well. You are to be my right hand man. There will be no 'ifs' or 'ands.' We will go now."

Through that night and the brief day that followed and the next night, Whitelaw labored among the suffering of Black Bottle. In the dawn of the second morning, he stopped on a spur above the camp and sat down on a ledge. He was fearfully exhausted. Below him through two or three miles the dug-outs and makeshift houses straggled up and down the valley in the blue-gray shadow; above him and abroad, the mountains bit into the sky like white tusks; far westward the waters of Thunder Bay wallowed in the gorge, mingling battering cakes of ice. It was horribly desolate and cold. He thought of the Pretty Person, and for a moment saw her in clear vision coming down a stair in pale mauve and silver fox-furs, her *svelte* figure swaying gracefully. He had once seen her so, and his eyes now gleamed with longing; then their hungry light faded. The poor, the ignorant, the sinful, the suffering lay scattered through the gloom below him. Above all, the ignorant, the pitifully ignorant, were there. These people were literally dying for want of enlightenment, perishing for want of sanitation, knowledge of cookery, the commonest arts of civilized life. The huts and holes of the





He bared his head to the cold and for a little time stood praying

natives reeked, the abodes of many of the whites were little better. He had found tuberculosis, trachoma, and divers distempers among the adults, but the children—ah, the throat diseases and fevers! the agonized eyes of the helpless little ones! A big building was needed, some place akin to a hospital, into which he could gather them from the nauseous, vermin-infested holes and put them in clean beds with unpolluted air to breathe. He got to his feet suddenly. He seemed to hear sounds of hollow coughing, groans and strangled suspirations, the cries of the frost-gripped, the hungry, the starving. The Pretty Person must wait, there were larger things in the world than an individual's wishes!

He went down across the snow, the pearly light from the southern mountains gleaming upon his frost-specked parka like grains of fire. An hour later he stood before Stockholm at the bar of the Blue Muck House. The place reeked stale and unsavory. Many of the chairs were empty and here and there a man sprawled in drunken sleep, but all the gambling games were in full progress. Stockholm looked heavy-eyed, weary, forbidding. Whitelaw leaned against the bar and regarded him with a level look.

"Would you sell this place?" he asked quietly.

Stockholm roused himself and blinked at the towering shape before him. "Skol Ay sell this place?" he growled.

"Yes," said Whitelaw. "I would like to buy it."

Stockholm began mopping the bar. "Val, Ay tenk a man skol sell anyteng if he get enough for it," he remarked sneeringly.

"Usually, yes," was Whitelaw's comment. "How much dust, weighed into your hands, will you take and walk out, leaving it just as it is?"

Stockholm sank down on a whisky barrel, his red eyes blank with wonder. "How mooch Ay skol take and walk out?" he gasped.

"Exactly: how much?" said Whitelaw.

Stockholm looked down at the big, purple, hairy hands, then slowly around the place, then at the amber eyes fixed

upon him. "Val, Ay don't know," he began. "Ay ban making money har. It ban hard work though. How mooch you give?"

Whitelaw unbuttoned his big coat and drew forth a bulging skin belt. "This place may be worth three or four thousand dollars, as things go in this region," he said. "But I will weigh you out even seven thousand dollars in gold, and you are then to hand me the keys. I want the building to-day—now, immediately."

Stockholm blinked at him dully. "Ay don't understand," he began.

Whitelaw cut him short. "You don't need to," he said. "Put the scales over here, we will weigh out the gold."

"But Ay don't see—what is the yoke, anyhow? What you ban up to?" stammered the Swede.

"I want the building for sick people. I want it this morning. I'll buy this or another in thirty minutes. Do you want the seven thousand?" was Whitelaw's impatient answer.

Stockholm got up slowly and the two stood looking in each other's eyes; then a string of oaths rumbled up from Stockholm's throat, and he turned and set the gold scales on the bar between them. "Ay tenk you ban bluffing, mester," he said. "Ay skol call yu. Pour it out."

Whitelaw said nothing, but opened the pouch and began emptying gold into the broad pan. The gambling games ceased, some of the men came forward, others sat looking.

"Am Ay to tak the goods ahd tens out of har?" asked Stockholm.

"You are to take nothing but your clothes," replied Whitelaw drily. Stockholm swallowed excitedly, his eyes dwelling on the pouring stream of gold like one fascinated. "Nineteen an ounce, three hundred and sixty eight and one half ounces," said Whitelaw. "I figured it before I came in. There you are! Get me a sheet of paper and a pen. I'll write a bill of sale and we will sign it. We will draw up other papers later, if necessary."

Stockholm ran unsteady fingers through the dull yellow heap of dust and nuggets and looked at the gold a while. "Ay ban sure now, mester, that yu ban crazy, but Ay meet yu straight, Ay

never buck on my play." He put a sheet of paper on the bar and a pen and ink, and Whitelaw wrote out a bill of sale for the building with all its appurtenances and they signed it. Whitelaw then turned about and lifted his voice and spoke very clearly:

"Gentlemen, I have bought this building and all it contains. At twelve o'clock it will cease to be a hotel and gambling house and become a Home for the sick of Black Bottle, particularly for the sick children of the natives. The cigars and tobacco that may be on hand here will be distributed among you with my compliments. The whiskey will be destroyed, the wines, if pure enough, will be kept for the sick. Beds that any of you may have been occupying I want for people who are dying for want of such comforts. If you have paid money in advance it will be refunded to you. I am going to help the sick of this town. Any aid you can give me I shall receive with gratitude. All men are my brothers. I am going to hold meetings from time to time in this room and, through an interpreter, try to teach the natives how to live more healthful lives. Every Sunday I am going to preach here. There is no school, no church—only ignorance and evil influences in this town. I put it to you, gentlemen, if religion and virtue are not entitled to a fair show, an even break, in competition with these? I am giving up much to do this. How long I can stand the strain I don't know. I am a changeful man, not strong in character, but what I am going to do now I have to do. So, men, I expect you to stand by me—at least, not to interfere. That is all; thank you."

How this was received, were worthy a chapter in a book on psychology. To the lawless citizens of Black Bottle, it had the cast of sheer bravery. To them it was well nigh as inspiring as a great and reckless wickedness. They liked it. Whitelaw's sack of gold had been more than half emptied, but other sacks in Black Bottle, he was assured, stood open to him.

That day the work began. Dog-teams came and went occasionally between Black Bottle and Valdez. Whitelaw sent down to the larger town an order for

needed supplies. Taku and two other natives became his active aides in dealing with the diseased and needy aboriginals; a committee of hardy white miners pledged him assistance and support. Then he wrote to the Pretty Person. He told her he had found a mine, was on his way out with gold, but the suffering and sinful had called him. He must teach and preach and serve them for a while. He would get gold from his mine the following summer and surely come to her. Possibly he was a weak, humanitarian fool, but he was helpless to be else than what he was. The work of mercy he had undertaken would absorb all his present store, but the mine—there was surely a fabulous deal of gold in it. Believe him, in the end he would come home very rich.

Then the arctic winter deepened, the vast cold tightened its clutch, the days were little more than grizzled, strange-hued dawns. It seemed always night. But such nights! Flaunting in the north, ghostly draperies of thin flame that set the heart quaking; overhead, mighty star-eyes that stooped near and looked intimately into the soul; and everywhere a white death-cloth clinging close upon the set features of the dead world. The miners could not work; they gambled and drank. But Whitelaw worked. Before the long winter had passed the natives called him the "Heaven Shaman," because he not only toiled tirelessly but prayed and taught and performed miracles. Yes, the Indians said, he performed miracles. They did not know that his knowledge of medicine was very imperfect, that it was his vivid personality, his flaming enthusiasm, that roused and renewed them with transforming faith. Even he himself was not wholly aware of the real secret of his healing power. He kept his strange hospital filled. The natives possessed little and for the most part paid nothing; the whites, such as fell under his care, paid as they were able.

Before the first Christmas was reached, the whites had trickled away to Valdez and farther south until less than a hundred were left in Black Bottle, but the natives all remained, meeting want

and the great cold with almost nothing to do. Whitelaw taught them how to help themselves by his example and with lessons as simple as a man might employ in teaching children. To the whites, he sometimes preached sermons as melting as love itself, again as dramatically terrible in denunciation of sin as anything in the tragedies of Racine or Corneille. Within himself, day by day there flamed a strange, delicious ecstasy, a taste of that wealth of consciousness that made titles and worldly dominion seem cheap to Jesus, a crown seem as chaff to Prince Gautama. His was the unexplainable joy of serving and giving, the strange bliss of Impersonal Love.

Then a letter, long delayed, came from the Pretty Person. It had a flavor of impatience; from between its lines breathed cold. It roused him, for at his heart's bottom a sense of her always remained, a something that was not unlike an invisible organ-reed, droning faintly through every clamor. He wrote to her again pledging fealty, then went on with his task.

At last the south's dull flare, which created their days, lifted and widened noon by noon, and the sun, mighty and wonderful, swung northward bringing spring. The resources of many of the whites were all but spent, the Indians were truly starving. Despite the *Shaman's* magic and his fierce toil, thirty of the natives had died. But for him the number surely would have been a hundred. Though his gold sack was now empty and flat, he began to ponder means of greater safety for these childish creatures against the coming of another winter. Within him began to whisper daily the enchanting words "My people," and there gripped more definitely upon him the great, sweet care of the Larger Fatherhood.

As the grasp of the cold relaxed, he debated how he should proceed about working his mine. The people needed him in many ways, physical and moral, so he sent two miners, Tony Marks and Gyp Glennon, to work his mine on shares. The excavation being already to bedrock and the men experienced, he was sanguine that in the autumn they would

come down to Black Bottle with a staggering load of gold. But when autumn came, Marks and Glennon sent down to him only two thousand dollars in "dust" by a returning miner, the two worthies themselves, with the first fall of snow, having made off over Grizzly Pass and down to Valdez and on to the "States," somewhere, with an unknown, but presumably great, sum of gold.

The blow staggered Whitelaw. The Pretty Person's letters had been chill. Not in so many words, but by implication, she had rated him a fool. Cut by the tip of the lash she wielded, he had thought to have his people measurably protected by Christmas-time, and go to her with visible proofs of wealth, returning the following season to work his mine in person. But now—when he paid his debts he would have nothing, save the adoration of these illiterate aliens of the wild! Yes, there was the Home, he might sell that. No, that was dedicated to their sore necessities. Could he turn the sick out in the cold? Whatever eventuated he must now remain and work.

Men came and went. For a little time after his expulsion from Stockholm's door, Ratline had skulked about, keeping a furtive skunk-eye out for Whitelaw, then he "went below," followed presently by the big Swede. During the late summer Stockholm had returned, playing steadily in the gaming places of Black Bottle. Rumor had it that the Swede's luck had been ill, financially he had fallen low. With the first snow Ratline came back, but, as before, warily kept out of Whitelaw's way. Then fell Christmas week, and destiny in Ratline and Stockholm sealed their fate and pointed the way, terribly but unalterably, for Whitelaw.

On the fourth day before Christmas, aided by Taku and a half dozen Indian children, Whitelaw was preparing for the Christmas festival the big room that once had been Stockholm's gambling place. Boughs of spruce and cedar and red-berried vines made the walls gay and green, and a young pine, verdant and symmetrical, towered to the ceiling from the platform from which Whitelaw usually preached and taught. On the prev-





A look of uncontrollable terror widened his drunken eyes

ious Christmas he had inaugurated the festival of love, explaining its joyful and sacred meaning, and now the camp was buzzing with anticipation, and the dark eyes of the Indian children were dancing with prophecies of wonderful things to come. Whitelaw himself had no gold of his own with which to deck the tree with gifts for them as in the year before, but the gamblers and painted ladies of the camp saw to it that his sack had something in it. Christmas and the parson-doctor's dramatic love for the unfortunate were tonic to the imagination of Black Bottle's wicked. Though at times Whitelaw pelted them with verbal vitriol, he was as a mother to them when they sickened. They would have fought for him.

As he put the last touches to the Christmas decorations that blear winter evening, a man muffled in skins stumbled in at the entrance, and dropping a rifle, all but fell into Whitelaw's arms. His face was black from frost-bite and his beard and parka clinked with dangling icicles of blood. He mumbled Whitelaw's name, entreating a bed to die in. His dogs and sled were outside; he had come down from the far Upper Claims; he had much gold; he had sprinkled the way with his life, for he was dying of lung-hemorrhage; he wanted only to give his soul up beneath Whitelaw's roof, for he trusted Whitelaw and owed him a great debt. Out of the man's jumbled gaspings Whitelaw gathered these statements as he and Taku carried the stranger into Whitelaw's room and put him in Whitelaw's bed. Two men, the stranger said, had followed him from Tragger's Place, five miles up the trail. He had held them off with a Winchester. Clearly they had purposed robbery but, though dying, he had kept them back, for he wanted Whitelaw to have the gold. Taku, after a time, went out, but the dogs and sled were gone.

When full night had come the stranger died. Whitelaw had taken a heavy belt of gold from about the man's body and had locked it in a trunk, and he had striven to stay, then to comfort, the departing soul. Toward the last the man had breathed very strange words.

"I have been criminal, back in the

States, and I don't want to tell my name. I came here a year ago to kill a man, but one night I heard you preach. Murder died out of my heart; I have not been the same since. I went north and worked by myself. God and the solitude, I believe, cleansed my spirit. I found myself through you. I have no one to whom I want to leave the gold. I want it to do good. I give it to you and these people." Whitelaw knelt beside him and prayed as he died.

When the man had been straightened and made decent in death, Whitelaw went out in the night—torn, elated, shaken with fearful questionings. He had received no word from the Pretty Person through three months, and the stranger had given him a fortune! He walked blindly down the valley toward the sea, hearing, yet not hearing the ice in distant Thunder Bay sullenly battering and crunching. After a time he returned and climbed the trail above Black Bottle; and sat for a long time on the ledge where, more than a year before, he had debated if he should buy a home for the sick or go back to the Pretty Person.

The world about him was dead white, bitter cold and infinitely solitary under the huge, silent moon, and there swept over him a wild longing for color and luxury, refined faces, the glow of electric lights, and the woman warmth of the Pretty Person against his heart. Had he not done enough? Could God ask more of him? The clear mental pleasure of *giving* ebbed in him and the long-smothered craving of the physical for *having* rose to rushing flood-tide. The great sack of gold, lying in the trunk near the dead man, magically inflamed his fancy, creating visions of flowers, radiance, pink faces and rich stuffs; somehow his present life looked brutal and squalid, his surroundings hideously alien and poor. But if he yielded the struggle and went home and wedded the Pretty Person, would he ever return? Would it not end with the sinking of his life in hers, accompanied by dawdling years of profitless ease? Then what of his people, grown into his marrow as a man's children grow? Well, he would strengthen the defenses about the unfortunate ones of the gold, then make his way back to the

Pretty Person. The next summer he would return and aid his people again, and again return to her. He arose full of energy and purpose. Yes, he would go home after Christmas. With this decision the Pretty Person floated transcendent in his thoughts, the sublimity of the wonderful white world about him dwindled, the spiritual voices of the mighty spotless mountains fell unheard. He was going out at last, he was going back to *her*!

He went down to the Home and busied himself about his work feverishly. Toward morning he went into the room where the dead stranger lay. He looked at the man's still face a moment, then turned to the trunk. The lock was broken, the bag of gold was gone! For a little he stood enthralled, staring as through a red fog, then he stepped to the window. It had been pried loose. He swung the single hinged sash back and looked out; footprints spotted the snow beneath. He looked abroad at the starlit whiteness, his fingers clenching, his eyes flaming strangely. He turned to the dead man. "I give the gold to you and these people. I want it to do good," he quoted bitterly. He shuddered as from a sudden throe of distaste for himself. "And I was going to use it selfishly! Now it is gone!" He caught a filled cartridge belt from the wall and buckled it about his waist, took a Winchester from a corner behind the bed, and glancing back at the stranger's accusing countenance, climbed out the window and stood in the snow. "I'll bring back the gold and it shall do good!" he muttered, the soft, almost womanly curves of his mouth drawn to angry, iron lines.

He swung forward like a hound on the trail, his eyes a-gleam on the fleeing scuffle of tracks. The moon hung pale and low, the stars were as a countless swarm of huge silver bees, the air was tinted with frosty pearl from a faint bloom of light in the south. He saw no human being anywhere. The footprints took a way that crossed the beaten trails of the camp, then out across the base of the mountain and down into the trail that led toward Valdez. Near the point where the footprints entered the main trail he found signs that a sled and dogs had been stationed, starting forward obviously upon

the arrival of the person who had stolen the gold. At that point the prints were of the feet of two men. Who were they? He did not know, but doubtless they were the men who from Tragger's Place had shadowed the stranger. Again he swung forward like a hound on the trail, his long limbs carrying him with hot eagerness mile after mile without pause. Icicles gathered on his beard, the wind drew against him in the gorges needled as with stinging specks of steel, but his body was damp with heat, his jaw working like one who hungers to kill. He would overtake them. Though they doubtless had six or seven hours' start of him, it was a hundred and fifty miles to Valdez, and he would come up with them. He pressed onward steadily until late in the afternoon when, upon rounding a rocky spur, he met the mail carrier from Valdez following a loaded sled toward Black Bottle.

"Have you met any one on the trail going out?" was Whitelaw's panted inquiry.

"Only Ratline and Stockholm," was the carrier's reply.

"Ratline and Stockholm? How far ahead of me are they?" Whitelaw's eyes flamed afresh.

"Four or five hours, I think, They were going as if Satan was after them. What's the trouble, Doctor?"

"They robbed a man. I can't wait to talk." Whitelaw strode onward, shouting back over his shoulder, "Tell Taku and the folks at the Home I expect to be back by Christmas eve." The carrier half consciously muttered assent as he stood, a picture of blank amazement, watching the tall, fur-clad figure plunge onward.

Then the yellow arch in the south dwindled to a purple smudge, the gray mountains turned blue, the gorges filled as with thin smoke, and the stars, inconceivable for numbers and glory, burst out, and after a time a wonderful moon blazed down on the world of snow. Whitelaw tramped onward unflaggingly until near midnight, then he became aware that his feet were dragging, that his body was crying for food. It was an example of his impulsiveness that he had started on this hunt without carry-

ing food, and of his absent-mindedness that in the excitement of the moment he had not thought to ask the mail carrier for bread. Three hours later he crept into a sheltered place and sank exhausted.

A kind of a sleep crept upon him, a cold stupor in which he had a sense of always walking, of wading ceaselessly in a waste of yielding, glimmering frost. Then he became conscious that snow was drizzling upon his face, and he tore himself awake, sprang up and hurried onward. The wind had strengthened and was blowing the snow about. He was concerned lest the trail should be covered by it.

In the grizzled flare of the late dawn he came to the remains of a camp-fire beside the trail, some charred sticks about the end of a smoking log. Weary members of a dog-team lay here and there, some of them tied. Near the fire stood a sled, bearing a box and bag of provisions and a bundle of blankets; on the ground lay a sleeping-bag. The snow was trampled and foot-prints led onward. Whitelaw looked about him and down the trail, puzzled, mystified. What inexplicable caprice had occasioned this abandonment of the sled and provisions? He peered around him again narrowly, not knowing but with the next moment a bullet, leaping out of ambush, might pierce him. Still, unquestionably the footprints he had been following went onward. He went to the sled and thrust his hand in the bag and brought out some hard bread and frozen cheese. Pushing chunks of these into his mouth and pockets, he looked his rifle over and turned quickly into the trail. An empty whiskey bottle lay there; he spurned it out of the way and hurried on.

As the stars paled and the gray light broadened, he stopped and scrutinized the footprints closely. The feet of one of the men were manifestly somewhat smaller than the feet of the other, and the tracks of the smaller were partly filled with blown snow, the larger prints being fresh. As he peered at the tracks through his white breath, a picture of what had taken place shaped itself in his quick fancy; Ratline, fired with liquor and greed, and the fact that he had personally broken into the Home and

taken the gold, had risen while Stockholm slept and had made off with the precious bag! Whitelaw straightened himself with a growl that was half laugh, half curse, and pressed onward, his eyes searching the dim wastes of snow before him.

An hour later the trail ascended a tumbled ridge, and, following upward and on through a tortuous pass, he came out above a long valley, white-bottomed as a porcelain cup. Below him three or four miles distant he saw the first of the quarry, a brown bundle of fur pushing in little jerks along the snow, and miles beyond the jerking bundle of fur a crawling dot, pricked dimly in the whiteness. With a cry he started down the trail, running and lunging under the lash of haste that impelled him. As he stumbled into the valley he heard himself swearing and suddenly shouted, "Shut up, you fool!" at something within himself and ran onward.

Ratline, too, seven or eight miles ahead, was hastening wildly, for he knew that death would surely be upon his track. But he was weighted with the big pouch of gold, and his stubby legs, urge them as he might, covered ground less rapidly than the two pairs of long legs hastening after him. Stockholm, his giant body a reservoir of boiling blood, was fairly stretching his liquor-soaked muscles to the breaking point in the race. Would he glut his rage when he came up with the absconder? His teeth champed together in a froth of oaths and he stamped the caitiff's footprints, as he would stamp the caitiff's body when he had him slain, the poltroon! Thus, thief pursuing thief, they strained onward, unaware and forgetful of that other pursuer, of all dangerous creatures the most dangerous—a man whose daily law had been love, carried by rage beyond all law.

Two hours and more went by while the three panted forward through the white, silent land. The dull blur in the south became a kind of glory, a vague yellow crept into the blues upon the snow about them, but they heard no sound save that of their laboring lungs and pounding hearts. Near noon Ratline, looking back, saw Stockholm less than a mile to the rearward. The Swede was



plowing his way forward like a mad bull, carrying a Winchester at half-cock. Ratline, blown and gasping, staggered in behind a point of rocks and fumblingly drew a flask of whiskey from his coat and finished its contents. He had tied the sack of gold about his waist outside his clothing and it dragged down upon his hips painfully. Fumbling still, he loosened it and threw it across his shoulder, tying its fastenings beneath the opposite arm-pit. Next he drew a revolver, his only weapon, and peered unsteadily around the jutting rocks, awaiting Stockholm. Gradually he sank to his knees, and, like a squat, red-eyed toad, blinked evilly at the figure heaving larger and larger along the white valley.

Then, as by some withering magic, his brutal countenance was swept blank, his loose, ugly mouth dropped open, the nostrils of his flat nose pinched together, and a look of uncontrollable terror widened his drunken eyes. A thousand yards beyond the big Swede the tall figure of the physician-preacher had come into view. Magnified against a background of dazzling snow, Whitelaw's form loomed seemingly to the height of two men. Ratline scrambled to his feet and turned about, whining like a trapped jackal. He ran a little way along the trail, then struck out into the hills through a volcanic confusion of huge boulders. Apparently his bemuddled faculties furnished him little more than animal instinct, a brute impulse to hide, to climb to some inaccessible hole and bury himself from sight. He would have stayed and fought Stockholm—from ambush, to be sure—for Stockholm was of his kind, but that other, the terrible doctor, the man of God, was not of his kind. He felt absolutely sure that Whitelaw would kill him, and he did not want to die. His leaden feet were suddenly on fire with life, but their life was fear, and the faster he ran the more overwhelming became his terror. Now and again he plunged sidewise, looking back over his shoulder, and, by some abnormal trick of his drunken wits, fancied he saw Whitelaw close behind him, but the face of the pursuer was the awful face of the dead man who had owned the gold!

Within a half mile his flight threw him abreast of a ledge of stone; above it the face of a soaring cliff, seamed, windeaten, bulging outward at points in vast contortions. Far aloft it looked to have hiding places accessible only to creatures with wings. Ratline ran whimpering along the cliff's base, looking upward, and, from ever increasing terror, close to insanity. A little way to the left he came upon a slide of splintered rock, a fixed cataract of strips and columns sprawling down from the towering ledges. Up this shattered way he clambered like something born with claws, for the hour a reverted high-holing cave-man run mad.

Stockholm, missing Ratline's footprints from the main trail, after a few steps forward turned back and followed the sailorman into the range, puffing, crouching, and looking about warily. Five minutes later Whitelaw, with that inexorable, iron look still in his face, stepped in upon their tracks, his rifle ready for instant use. As he threaded his way among the hulking white masses he scanned every object ahead of him with keen intensity. It was a place where an ambush might easily be laid, and he, too, began to crouch and pass from point to point stealthily. Ahead of him loomed the front of the cliff, and presently something stirring high among its ledges touched his vision. He stopped short, gazing at the object sharply. It must be Ratline making for some hiding-place beyond the power of larger men to reach! And Ratline had the gold! Whitelaw, with rifle at full cock, quickened his steps, bending low and half running. At the end of a hundred yards he again stopped. Ratline, crawling along a shelf, had lifted himself and was trying to draw his body upward over a ledge. It was a long shot, but Whitelaw's rifle leaped to his shoulder and his eyes burned through the sights, centering upon the back of the human figure plastered against the cliff. He did not for an instant consider if it were right or wrong to kill the man; he was in the grip of that fierce impulse, old as the law of self-preservation itself, which impels men to destroy robbers and snakes.

But he did not press the trigger. As he aimed, a sharp detonation burst out beyond some rocks ahead of him, and the man on the face of the cliff stiffened upward, loosened his clutching fingers and fell backward, plunging downward from ledge to ledge. Whitelaw dropped his gun, in his throat a cry of horror. As if some taut thing within him had snapped asunder, his lust to kill was gone. Involuntarily he started forward with hands lifted, staring upward.

Half way down the precipice the falling man lodged upon an outjutting ledge, hanging with head and shoulders over the edge of the shelf. From that point the heavy sack of gold, its fastenings broken by the fall, dropped from the dead man's shoulder, burying itself in the snow at the base of the cliff. Whitelaw ran forward, still looking upward at the human thing quivering faintly on the rim of the ledge. Then he saw Stockholm.

The Swede, having no knowledge of Whitelaw's presence, had thrown down his rifle and was running toward the cliff's base, roaring wild yells of triumph. He scrambled up through the snow-covered rocks, seized the sack of gold, and sinking down with it in his arms, laughed as a wolf might laugh. Then he began to sing, rocking back and forth in ecstasy with the gold pressed against his breast. Whitelaw stood still; presently he would have to strangle this monstrous creature and take the gold from him! Almost with the thought his eye caught a movement of the body hanging over the ledge a hundred feet above Stockholm, and the next moment, as from its last quiver of expiring life, the body slid into the air and rushed downward. Whitelaw's lips parted with an involuntary shout of warning, and Stockholm, his braying song stifled in his throat, started to arise. It was when he was half way to his feet that the descending body of the man he had killed struck him. Stockholm's neck snapped like a pipe-stem under the hurtling impact, and together the two rolled among the rocks and were still, the tragedy of selfishness ended.

For a little space Whitelaw stood dumb, his face blank, his faculties suspended. But ten minutes before he had

been reeking with heat, now he felt chill and numb. He looked up at the vague gray sky and around at the white chaos of things. No sound rose anywhere, not a whisper of life outside his own veins. Was God there? He moved up among the rocks and gazed at the distorted shapes sprawling half-buried in the snow. They looked an epitome of sin's sequences, the squalid, final rags of appetite and desire. A deep sense of personal unworthiness, of humility, swept over Whitelaw. He straightened the two limp shapes side by side close to a protecting ledge and heaped their bodies high with the white snow; then he bared his head to the cold and for a little time stood praying; then he picked up the bag of gold, zestless, indifferent to it, and moved away. Twice he stopped and looked back, wishing he might do more, then walked onward.

In the evening of the following day he came to Black Bottle. Taku and his brethren had buried the dead stranger. Half the adults and most of the children of the camp were gathered in the audience room of the Home. The place was fine with Christmas greenery and the black eyes of the Indian children glistened as they looked at the "tree." But the *Shaman* the mystery of the absent *Shaman*? Taku, the interpreter, made more than one speech, telling them the *Shaman* had gone on a swift journey, doubtless a big medicine quest, but he would return. The *Shaman* had told the carrier he would return by the time the tree was lighted, and the *Shaman* never spoke falsehood. Old man of the tribe arose and spoke, praising the white friend who had made them his people, and a hairy miner, a son of Russia, arose and told them with tears of the bitter thing he had once been and the joyful thing he now had become, since their friend had taught him the law of love. Thus an hour went by, and at length silence fell as they waited, and still they sat on in silence, looking at the tree and the *Shaman's* place, that was empty.

Then at last, a towering figure came in through the door and every head turned quickly, and there was the master! He came forward slowly, as one so weary he walks as in a dream. He looked older and more stooped of shoulder than they

had ever seen him. He pushed back the wolf-skin parka from about his haggard face, and with an effort stepped upon the platform to his place beside the gleaming tree. Then he steadied himself and looked at them. For a moment the light seemed to blind him, then he saw the love and joy in the countenances of the grown people, and the eyes of the children glowing toward him, and his drawn features kindled with a smile.

"I have walked very far and am very weary," he said, and again he tried to smile but could not. "Two men carried away a quantity of gold that did not belong to them. The stranger who died here gave it to me for—you. I have brought it back. One of the men who took the gold slew the other, and the slain man, though dead, killed his slayer. It was very strange. I myself was tempted to take the gold and go back to the States, for my heart hungered after a woman of my tribe. But the crime of another turned me again to you. God turns all things finally to good."

He unfastened the bulging pouch of gold from about his body and placed it against the base of the tree, then he smiled radiantly as he looked at them. "It is a Christmas present for you all," he went on. "It is both for the old and for the young, for we will now have a real school, a big place where you shall learn to read books and make useful things. And after a time you will have a church, and the reasons for making a Christmas festival of gladness like this will become clearer and clearer to you. Taku will speak the words I have spoken, that you all may understand. Taku will give you the gifts. I am very faint. I will take food, then come back to you." He passed out through the rear door, hearing behind him a rustle of children in joyous anticipation, but not seeing the mists of

gratitude that trembled in many eyes.

Later, when the festival had ended, Taku and Whitelaw stood alone in the big room looking at the tree, now stripped of its gifts but still blinking with guttering candles. The pouch of gold lay at the tree's base; no one had touched it. Whitelaw looked at the guttering candles mistily, his fancy far away. Taku brought a letter from the drawer of a table and placed it in his hand.

"It is for the *Shaman*. It came yesterday. Taku wishes it may be good medicine," said the Indian.

The eyes staring mistily at the dying candles turned to the letter, and were suddenly as amber lighted from within. "Thank you, Taku," said Whitelaw, and opening the envelope he glanced quickly at the written sheet. For a moment his eyes seemed to fade, then he closed them, and his hand sought Taku's shoulder for support. Taku's grave, dark face lifted with swift concern.

"She has married another, Taku. She says she could not love a fool!" Whitelaw's voice shook and trailed away desolately.

The Indian's eyes filled with shadows; for the moment he did not comprehend, then he grunted in scorn. "The *Shaman* is a Heaven *Shaman*," he said. "He is not for a woman. Many, many love him. He is husband, he is brother, he is sister, he is father to all people. He has many children; his joy is great. For four days the sick children have cried for him."

Whitelaw straightened his shoulders and pulled up his tall form, his tired face softening in the light. "My people!" he murmured tenderly. "My people! It is sweeter to love many than to love but one. Taku, to-night—now—I give myself, such as I am, a gift to all men. Put out the candles and bring the lamp. We must see the sick before we sleep."



## THE DESERTERS

by Harry Allyn

Illustrations by Horace Taylor

NOBODY loves a tramp. He's cussed by the cap'talists if he don't work—and cussed by the labor unions if he does. The gov'ment calls him a "Problem," puts out big, enticin' pictures of trop'cal scen'ry with fancy dressed soldiers walkin' round with apparently nothin' to do but roll and smoke cigarettes, to coax him to enlist—and then passes him a gold brick by hivin' him up in some God-forsaken place where he can't bat an eye without a permit, for his full term.

How do I know? Why, Joe and I've been soldiers—or marines, which is worse.

It was late October when the thought first struck me that we'd ought to alter our system of livin'. We were layin' off fine and comfortable under the shade of a bunch of maples facin' a bill-board depictin' a full fledged battleship ploughin' along through a sunlit storm at sea with three or four young fellers clothed in masquerade togs loungin' aloft in the fightin' turret calmly pickin' off their country's enemies with a rapid fire gun,

while two or three more regaled 'em with funny stories. You could almost see the feller sightin' the gun grin—in the picture.

And right alongside was another chromo of a scene in some country, the Lord knows where—it aint been discovered yet, I reckon—of cocoanut trees, date palms, bananers, pine-apples—and lemons, the only true thing about the work of art—and a lot of military gents, some settin' at a table and others strollin' round or leanin' non-shylantly against the veg'tation while one sport dressed in ridin' togs passed over a voylet scented invite to a pink tea to one of the coat models. It fairly made me envious to just set and watch 'em; they were so appetizin'.

"Say," I says, joggin' Joe out of his doze, "how'd ye like to be let loose in a country where yer livin' grows on trees and ye don't have to make an effort to gather it in; just lay with yer mouth open and wait until it ripens enough to fall?"

"Who's been feedin' *you* any locust



blossoms?" he growls back, feelin' kinder miffed at havin' his rest broke—he's turrible that way. "Read yer cook-book and go back to dreamin'; you'll feel better."

"It's within our reach," I continues solemn-like, "within our reach. A p'ternal gov'ment is stretchin' out the helpin' hand at this minute to bring such useful citizens as you'n I into its shelterin' embrace for periods rangin' from four years, upwards or downwards—whichever way ye look at it."

"What's troublin' ye?" he inquires, raisin' himself up on one elbow in some alarm, for he thinks somethin' of *me*, "po-to-maine poisonin' from that corn beef we snared off'n that free lunch counter last week, or the grapes we swiped out'n that vineyard this mornin'? You aint right in your reason-box; they aint no such country."

"They aint!" I ejaculates, pointin' over to the picture. "They aint? D'ye ever know this 'ere grand and graftin' republic to pass out anything with the taint of un-truth on it? What d'ye s'pose George Washin'ton fit and bled at Bull Run for, and Bill Bryan's still fightin' and bleedin' for, if it wa'n't to put this gov'ment in a place where it *dassent* lie. D'ye imagine a gov'ment, so finicky it wont allow ye to use a beer stamp—just a plain old beer stamp—more'n once or twice, is goin' to inveigle ye into a shell-game just to see ye wriggle when ye get stung?"

"I dunno what you're gassin' about," he grumbles, turnin' over in the bed of sweet smellin' leaves we'd gathered together.

I saw there wa'n't no use in goin' on without I could get him to set up—some fellers' brains go dormant when they're in a reclinin' position, mebbe you've noticed it—so I gouged him again until his mad begun to raise and I knew I had him goin'.

"That 'ere picture," I says, pointin' down the slope and across the road to the bill-board, "is took from life by the Phot'graph Gen'ral of these United States. The nights are gettin' cooler and longer—and the days shorter; and the county jails and poorhouses are gettin'

fuller'n fuller. The frost is already turnin' the woodbine on the walls to red and the leaves on the trees to the sere and yellor; and it aint goin' to be long before we'll be wonderin' what in thunder we've done with the summer's prosperity. It seems like the hand of Providence had been stretched out to keep us from wearin' out our souls in the gallin' confines of some public wood-yard by bringin' to our notice the bee-utiful climes layin' beyond our own shores which we aint visited. Let's enlist and get to be somethin' more self respectin' than just cheap, common hoboes livin' off'n what other folks earn."

"Well, if you aint the most unstable feller on earth!" Joe says in some astonishment, drawin' his knees up and wrappin' his arms around them. "Only this mornin' you was droolin' on about the lovely Injun summer, and hopin' that when you cashed in it'd be in the middle of a record breakin' winter, so's the fear o' hell wouldn't seem so darned dreadful. And here ye are, railin' against one of the most peaceful existences imaginable, and wantin' to visit furrin places inside a uniform! Lord, but I never seen you beat!"

"It aint that!" I comes back. "It aint that! It's an overwhelmin' desire to go rollin' down the pages of future school hist'ries as one of the preservers of my country, like—Bill Tweed or Ben'dict Arnold."

"How're we goin' to reach them heights?" he inquires, gettin' int'rested in spite of himself.

"Enlist," I replies. "Pick out the service most likely to give results—and fasten onto 'er!"

"Which looks the most likely to *you*?" he interrogates.

"Wa-al," I says, thoughtful-like, "the navy's good—vurry good. You're always sure of findin' the dinin' room door open at meal time, and your hammock's always made up at night; but this swashin' up and down over the Lord only knows how many feet of cold, wet water in a thing one prick from a hat pin'll send to the bottom, aint so extremely comfortin'. And in the army there's all them long strolls carryin' your bed and board along

on your back—or pickin' it up on your way like Sherman did down in Georgy."

"We're doin' *that* now," Joe interrupts.

"Yes, I know," I explains, "but not under the sanction of the gov'ment; that's different."

"Well, what's the rest?" he queries insistently.

"And then there's the marines," I responds. "Fellers who don't have a blamed thing to do with marchin' or swimmin'; just stand round keepin' their buttons bright and countin' the hours betwixt the eats."

"The marines for our'n," Joe says decisively, and as it looked equally good to me, we fixed on the marines, of which there were a couple in the fruitful picture; gettin' up from our nest of leaves, we sa'ntered down the slope into the dusty road to pick out our respective positions in the next picture that was took of the same place.

"This 'ere allurin' advertisement," Joe says, studyin' the readin' matter on the bottom while I feasted my eyes on the cocoanuts, "says the nearest recruitin' office is at Alb'ny, twelve miles away. Will we take the turnpike or wait here for a freight?"

"Might as well walk," I responds. "Twelve miles aint nothin' to a couple of fellers who've already hiked it forty thousand, and mebbe we'll meet up with somethin' delectable to the inner man *ong-route*—which we wont do inside of a box car."

It was gettin' late in the evenin', near supper-time as we could tell by the kitchen lights and odors, when we got into Alb'ny, and we hustled down along the river front to where we had an idee we could sequester a bite or two of free lunch off'n the counter before the bar-keep got wise to us.

It wa'n't only a bite at that, before the bar-rag and a hunk of ice come siftin' our way and we left by the side entrance to avoid the rush at the front doors.

"See," I says, as we gained the walk, me grippin' a pig's knuckle and the fork and Joe a handful of radishes. "See, it's just as I've said; nobody's got any use for a hobo. If we'd wore uniforms, we

could have stood up to that counter all night—and mebbe somebody'd bought the beer on the strength of our bein' defenders of the flag."

We slept that night in an empty crockery hogshead behind a store, dreadful cramped, but still out of the fine, drizzlin' rain that'd begun to fall—and early next mornin' was standin' outside the recruitin' office waitin' for Uncle Sam to come round and open up.

About eight o'clock—another evidence of the easy times a feller has a-workin' for the gov'ment—two gents lookin' just like the picture we'd fell for the day before, come sa'nterin' down the walk, and unlockin' the place, begun to set the trap to catch some more human insects.

We sot there on the steps until nine, waitin' for the brig'dier gen'ral to heave in sight—the first two was only deckhands, we figgered—and immejitly he turned the corner, his brass-trimmed, blue shoulders throwed back as if the gov'nor of the state wa'n't nothin' but a two-spot to him—I knew he was the feller to hire out to.

I'm omittin' a lot right here, for it aint so dreadful int'restin'. But the follerin' day we landed at the Brooklyn Navy-yard to begin our tuition as a couple of bulwarks—or possibly I should have said bulkheads—of the nation. And from then on for two weeks we heard nothin' but orders, gen'ral orders—and orderlies—until I'd give a hoss and a half—and every blamed cent of my next year's pay at fourteen per twelfth—to've been in the voylant ward of an insane asylum where there aint nothin' but *disorder*.

As I inferred before, we stood it for two weeks, me hardly darin' to meet Joe's eye on account of the reproachful looks he was storin' up and passin' out to me six at a time, and then the climax arrived. And all because of a measly little cigarette I was smokin' at a time and place where the gov'ment said I should-n't. Just imagine, nothin' but a cigarette bein' the stumblin' block betwixt heroism and us! But it was so; and when the long, lank complainant with the stripes on his sleeves went over backwards into the lieutenant's g'raniums from meetin' up with a hard bunch of fives propelled

by your'n truly, I knew my term of service as a marine had drawn to a close and I'd be a heap better off som'er's else.

I yelled to Joe—who'd been visitin' me on my beat sub-rosy—and ducked into my little dog-house out of sight at the approach of Mr. Stripes, and in less time than it'd take to locate a flea bite, he'n and I were on our way across the p'rade ground through the dark of the evenin' with a howlin' mob of sailor policemen ravenin' along behind us, seekin' to dip their horny hands in our gore.

Mebbe you think it's easy to get across the Brooklyn yard in the dark, but lemme tell you that when you're dodgin' a court-martial for pluggin' your superior officer, it's the most populous piece of ground in the United States. I'll bet we run into, over and around more'n a hundred fellers doin' guard duty through the grounds, and some of 'em must 'a' wore the prints

of our gov'ment shoes for months afterwards. When we got into the black shadows of the shops it was a trifle better; we could dodge 'em easier and stood less chance of gettin' stung by a slug out of their guns, but when we got out on the water front where we could look across and see the lights of little old New York, we must 'a' stood out on the sky line like the statue down the bay.

As we reached the edge of the dock I glanced over my shoulder and saw that the long-legged cuss in the stripes had outstepped the rest of the bunch by sev'ral furlongs as it seemed to me.

"Cert'nly I'm goin' to give you somethin' to remember *me* by in the here-after," I muses to myself, and ducked over onto a short pier extendin' out into the river a matter of forty or fifty feet.

He follered me, just as I'd intended he should, and as I reached the end with him about ten feet behind, hand out-



The long, lank complainant went backwards into the lieutenant's g'raniums

stretched to neck me, I tumbled across his path, and with a yell that must 'a' been perfectly legible in Jersey, over into the grease of the East River he went without even waitin' to take his watch out of his pocket—supposin' he wore one.

"I've added hangin' to our other penalties," I grunts to Joe—for Long-legs had jarred my ribs somewhat *ong-route* to his bath—as I cantered off the pier to the dock, "and now for somethin' to make our get-away on."

Floatin' in the water a piece below us, was a lot of spiles for dock-makin'. The row behind us was gettin' thicker'n thicker; and without waitin' to quell it by throwin' the rest of Uncle Sam's marine reserve into the drink, we slipped down onto the wood pile and begun unloosenin' the outer one from the ropes which held it.

I've rode strange things. Once Joe and I went into the Union station at Chicago, embracin' a couple of vent'lators on the roof of the C. B. & Q. pres'dent's private car. And once, in the month of Febr'ary, I froze myself fast by the seat of my pants to the tank box of the Mile-a-minute Express betwixt Cleveland and C'lumbus—and came near bein' boiled to death by the fireman with a can of hot water out of the injector before we parted comp'ny. And another time Joe and I were both cast adrift on the back of an el'phant out of a wrecked circus train. But when it comes down to *real* excitement, you want to stir your sluggish blood into action by takin' a voyage on a log in the East River. Before we'd swung out fifty feet from the shore I could see we wa'n't goin' to have a calm trip. The tide was down and the wind was up; and big chilly waves kept surgin' over our tree in a way that made me kinder regret the nice warm guard-house behind. At first, I'd figgered that the worst we'd get would be wet underpinin', but our added weight sunk the timber down a good deal, and the water was a heap rougher'n it looked to be from the shore. And traffic! Tugs, a-blowin' and tootin' for right of way—or any old way at all—ferries plowin' up and down on the bias, three or four

sloops a-beatin' up to the Sound against the tide, and a big passenger boat from some'r's up Connecticut way comin' down and two more goin' out. It was consider'ble confusin', partic'larly when we hadn't no control over our own craft, but just had to trust to the Lord of deserters to see us safe through the mix-up.

By paddlin' with our hands, we managed to keep head-on toward the other shore, and I was congratulatin' myself that we were makin' ruther good progress when I heard a yell from Joe, who was holdin' down the stern. I looked over my shoulder, and for an instant ever' mean thing I ever done went slidin' through my mem'ry like beads off'n a wire. Not a hundred feet behind us was one of them big railroad floats with a whole train on it a-surgin' down on us like the hand of Fate.

Man's a gr'garious critter, and mebbe I'm gr'gariouser than most, for I've always had a strange desire to die in comp'ny. I kinder hate to hit the dark trail alone. The instant I spied the float I knew we were in for one of the most excitin' eppysodes of our Scotch plaid careers—and we've had eppysodes a-plenty. I dropped off into the water—it was the easiest way and my duds were wet through anyway—and keepin' hold of the log to guide me, let myself slip back to where Joe was lettin' out one yell after another to the pilot of the tug pushin' the float to alter his course.

He was wastin' his breath; that screech of his'n couldn't have reached back fifty feet. And pullin' him off the spile I started out with the over-hand stroke to get out of the way.

If we'd stayed aboard we'd cert'nly had the kibosh put on us, and prob'bly got an inch in the advertisin' matter introducin' us to the public as two unknown floaters picked up in the upper bay. But with our customary luck—we're lucky, Joe and I—we just managed to get out of range of the head of the float far enough to have it scrape our backs in passin'.

The next thing I recall was havin' somethin' snaky trail across my arm as I raised it for a stroke; and grabbin' it with one hand and Joe's shoulder with

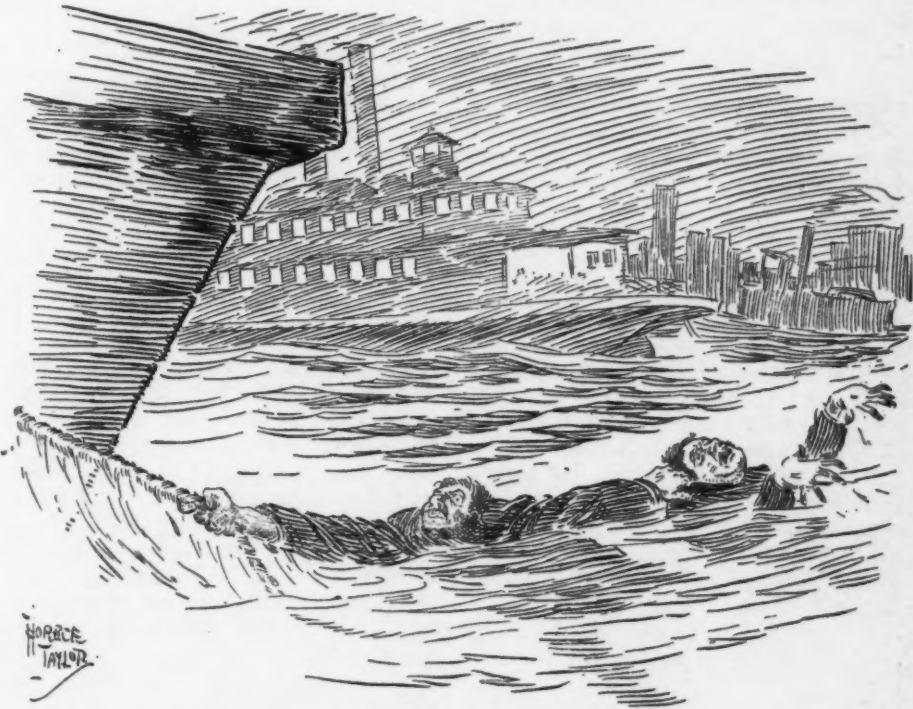


the other, I hung on like a pup to a bone. Lord, but how we surged down into the water as we swung round in the direction the float was goin'! I thought we'd never come to the top. But all at once we come to the surface in the calmest water imag'nable, my chin bristles scrubbin' along over the slime on the float's hull, and I knew we were saved from a greasy demise.

It was quite a pull to come up on the rope to where it was fastened, but after

surface free from care? I guess yes! And it was sincere, too.

As soon as we'd got rested a bit, we got to our feet, and miser'ble to the marrow of our bones, sneaked back amongst the cars lookin' for one of them havens of refuge to the free traveler, an end door. We found it after inspectin' four or five cars, and twistin' off the seal with as little compunction as we'd lifted an egg from a nest, oozed through into the warm, quiet darkness of that loaded box



I hung on like a pup to a bone

repeated half drownin's from the choppy waves which washed over us semi-occasionally, we made it, and hand over hand, up that line we went to the deck six feet above us, like two monkeys climbin' a grape vine.

And when we reached it, didn't we lay down with our faces turned up to the skies where the stars were twinklin' at us as if they were laughin' at the joke we'd had played on us, and thank that same Lord of the deserters who'd given us another chance to wander over the earth's

car, feelin' that mebbe we still held a few tricks up our sleeves we hadn't exhibited yet.

I went stumblin' round over the packin' cases in the blackness, tryin' to find out if I could make out anything that would give me a line on our destination, but nix on the line. The only thing I had to go by was that busted seal on the door which told me we hadn't arrived as yet. Joe in the meantime was gettin' out of his wet duds, and after near fracturin' my neck three or four

times—and completely breakin' the commandment against swearin'—I felt my way back alongside of him and begun to strip off and wring out the fine blue uniform I'd been so stuck on a week or so before.

For a spell I was somewhat worried for fear we'd put into New York, and kept peekin' out of the door. But directly I saw we were slippin' under the Brooklyn Bridge I felt assured that our next stoppin' place'd be Jersey, and then—the Lord only knew where.

In another thirty minutes we felt a lot of bumpin' and grindin' outside and knew we were makin' a slip some'r's. Then there was a long period of comparative silence, durin' which we went to sleep and woke up shiverin' with the cold three or four times, and then that old familiar chug as an engine backed in from the dock and yanked us off onto the main land.

It's a fine and useful thing to be acquainted with railroad yards; I could almost tell to what section we were bein' shifted by the way we jarred in and out over the frogs and switches. After a seemin'ly long time, I sneaked up to the end door and got a look at the lay of the land. It took some little harkin' back in my mem'ry to place us, but just then a yard engine went rumblin' down the track alongside and I knew we'd landed in the property of the old, reliable Erie. I went back beside Joe and stretched out in perfect peace and confidence that we could sleep as long as we pleased without bein' roused out to pass up any explanations.

The next thing I remember was Joe shakin' me restless-like by the shoulder. "Hey," he says, "the sun is up and been so for some time, I guess!"

"Where are we?" I inquires, feelin' sorter stiff from our night's adventures.

"Dunno," he responds, gettin' up and peekin' out the door, "but we're on the move, and as we can't go but one way out of Jersey, it must be westward."

"I wish I had a vally to get my mornin' suit in order," I muses out loud, "but as long as we aint, I reckon we'd better swing 'em out between the cars and let the wind flap 'em dry."

It must 'a' been a funny sight to the rural subscribers along the right o' way to see two gov'ment uniforms danglin' unoccupied from the end of a box car, but we couldn't put 'em on wet—and we needed 'em on our bodies until we could make a change for the worse.

Another long period of rumblin' and jarrin' ensued, and then we begun to slow down for a stop. I got up and scrambled to the door to yank in our laundry before we rolled into some place where folks'd get wise to the contents of the car.

I pulled in one suit; it was Joe's. Then I begun to feel outside for mine where I'd fastened 'em to the hasp of the door by the suspenders, but they seemed to have shifted their moorin's. I felt again with cold sweat beginnin' to ooze out of me all over. Nothin' doin'. Gettin' des-p'rate and not carin' a durn whether I was seen from the outside or not, I shoved the door back on the slides and leanin' out, scanned the end of that car for my sadly needed wearin' apparel. It wa'n't there.

For an instant I were downright heart-sick. It's an awful thing to be a stranger in a strange land—but a whole lot awfuller to be one in underclothes only. Then hope suggested that mebbe they'd lodged on some projection on the trucks of the car behind, and regardless of life or appearances, out I tumbled onto the drawhead and doubled myself over until I imagined I could see the steps of the caboose thirty cars behind, but not one shade of blue met my eyes.

I've been in some tight places, but always with my clothes on. Gimme a full stomach—and sufficient duds to cover it—and I'm game to take a chance at almost anything from passin' a bad quarter on a blind man to elopin' with an aëroplane. But—and I'd like to put that in cap'tals if I wa'n't afraid the printer would accuse me of ign'rance—remove my garments and I'm like Mr. Samson in the Bible—"as another gent," tame and lackin' in energy and ing'nuity.

When I crept back into the shadow inside the car, my spirits was busted entirely. And I aint ashamed to say I sot down and come mighty near weepin'.



"Clothes don't make the man"

"Why aint ye dressin'?" inquires Joe. "The porter'll soon be comin' through to hook up the berths."

"I am dressed," I replies in a still, small voice.

"Quit your joshin'," he says, shakin' the cinders out of his coat before slippin' it on. "Crawl into your duds and let's be swingin' off before we're forced to—and somebody gets wise to the uniforms."

"I aint got no duds," I exclaims desperate-like. "Ever' blasted thread I can lay claim to on earth is on my body at this 'ere minute."

"Jee-im'ny-crickets!" he ejaculates, staggered at the enormity of the accident. "No duds?"

"Not a dud!" I answers sorrowful-like. "The galluses give out and they've wafted hence, the track-walker of this section only knows where."

In the meantime we were slowin' down more and more until with a sudden jerk we come to a standstill. Joe and I never

budged; the matter in hand was too gigantic to be disturbed by a mere jerk.

"What are we goin' to do?" Joe interrogates solemn-like.

"I dunno," I responds, as far down in the dumps as an optimistic feller like me ever gets. "I dunno, unless we stay aboard this car until it stops for good even if it keeps on goin' to the Pacific coast—and we get throwed off. Ye know,"—and here I made it impressive—"ye know I *can't* go out into a cold, unfeelin' world clothed in nothin' but gov'ment underwear; it's illegal, and—and indecent."

"What *will* we do then?" he insists in a lost, far-away tone.

"You'll have to skirmish out and see what *you* can do!" I responds some sharp-like. "You've *got* to purvide me with sufficient wearin' apparel or I'll apply to the courts and have ye up for non-support."

Just then there come a terrific bump

up against our car, and then a sort of an unloosenin', so to say. I can't explain it exactly, but if you'd ever traveled over the Springless System you'd know. And then we heard an engine's exhaust right alongside and railroaders slingin' sarcastic remarks at ever'thing in gen'ral. Directly we felt another bang from the opposite end, and the next thing we knew we were rollin' backward.

"I'll bet a hoss blanket," I says—that bein' the thing I stood in need of most, and consequently the greatest sacrifice—"I'll bet a hoss blanket they're goin' to leave this car right here."

They were; and it didn't take 'em long to do it. In five minutes I took a peek out through a crack and we were bein' shunted way off to one side amongst a lot more boxes and coal dumps.

"Glory be!" I ejaculates, more'n overjoyed to think I stood some sort of im-mejit show of gettin' clothed again.

Soon's the car stopped, I says to Joe: "Now you get out and hustle, and don't—don't, for human'ties sake, get arrested."

He clumb out the door, and no sooner was he out of sight than I begun to worry, for he aint strong on the initiative—although he might be on the referendum—whatever that is.

It seemed weeks that I waited; almost afraid to breathe ever' time some yard-man'd go crunchin' past, and some time in the middle of the thirteenth, I heard Joe's whistle outside and I knew he'd made good for once at least without my guidin' hand.

When he crawled in, if it hadn't been for his voice I wouldn't known him. He had on a little, dinky muslin cap that instructed ever'body to masticate "Hearse-plume Fine-cut," a long-tailed frock coat and a pair of brown overalls—and under his arm he lugged a big bundle.

He unrolled it and spread it out on a packin' case. It was a mixed collection. The trousers had been designed for a number nine man, and the coat for a number five boy, I should judge. I didn't find any fault at his lack of discrimination in pickin' 'em out; I'd been almost satisfied with a bar'l. And I didn't ask him where he'd gathered 'em up, al-

though I much surmise he'd been burglin' one of them donations church wimmen sometimes send out to the heathens in Africky. There was another sky-piece sim'lar to the one he wore, and he *did* volunteer the fact that he'd picked 'em out of a basket in front of a tobacco store—but nothin' more.

I fell into the trousers and squeeze myself into the coat, and after some reefin' in and loosenin' out, sot the cap on my head and was ready to meet all comers again. Since then I've had more disrespect for the high-brow who give vent to the opinion that "Clothes *don't* make the man."

We sallied out through the end of the car and crept still and easy up the tracks toward where we could see a lot of chimneys belchin' forth black smoke, feelin' more self-respectless—and consequently more natural in our old cast-offs than we ever had in our well fittin' suits of government cloth. It was our atmosphere and we had no business to depart from it; none whatever.

Just beyond the round-house we run across a gang of section hands at work on the track a-settin' in a new switch. We give 'em a wide berth, for neither one of us had got used to our duds as yet, and round behind an old wreckin' car we stepped into a bee-utiful nest of dinner buckets out of work in the shade. Pickin' out the two biggest ones, we started to hike it out of that neighborhood by the shortest route, which was up through the yards and across the fields to the river bank.

And right here I want to insert a wise hunk of advice: I don't care in what line of business you're in—don't ever neglect the trifles. Some of the wisest crooks in the country have fell down on them little, inconsidered things—matters so triflin' at the time as to almost be out of sight. And here's another illustration of it.

While Joe and I were makin' our selections from the flock of dinner buckets, a smutty, bare-legged kid of twelve or thirteen come crawlin' into sight eight or ten cars farther on, draggin' a grimy old bag he was pickin' up coal in. He watched our proceedin's with int'rest until we started to make our get-away.



Then he hollered, and for the first time, Joe and I re'lized that the eye of the Almighty wa'n't the only one on us. Joe flung a rock his way and I made a face—a dummed sight more efficient than the rock, for I'm a toler'ble good face-maker, while Joe's a rotten stone-thrower—and he scooted back under the car and was a quarter of a mile away, I pr'sume, before we got up to where he'd disappeared.

After we'd got well up through the yards, we cut across to the river, and settlin' down under the red and yellor foliage of a clump of choke-cherry bushes, spread out our feast so's we could average it up.

Them section hands must 'a' had mighty good providin' women at home—all except the warmed-over breakfast food in mine which I et at once so's to get it out of the way while I was the hungriest. There was eggs boile l, and eggs fried and slammed in betwixt big slabs of bread, two big blankets of corned

beef and a dish of cabbage—the left-over remainders of a boiled dinner from the day before—three doughnuts as big and tough as life buoys, a hunk of cheese the size and consistency of an oak wedge, and a section of mince pie half the diameter of a palm leaf fan—in my pail too.

We divided—I'd split a postage stamp with a pardner providin' I got the side with the printin' on—and for ten minutes there was nothin' but silence to be heard exceptin' the champin' of our jaws whenever we buckled into the cheese. It was a feast to be remembered. I've sot into some mighty int'restin' feeds, but the memory of that lay-out under the frosted leaves, with nothin' to disturb the solemnity of the occasion but the drowsy hum of the late fall insects and the few birds who hadn't started south, lingers yet—and always will.

A full stomach conduces to slumber. And three minutes after we'd sunk the empty dinner pails in the middle of the stream, we were nestlin' down in the



"That's them!" he squeals, p'intin' his finger at us

brown October leaves on our way out of this vale of tears and sorrows to one of nightmares.

I come travelin' back to earth with some velocity. And what did I see when I sot up and begun to take notice, but that whole gang of section hands, armed with pick handles, tampin' bars and other implements of railroad culture, headed by a feller as tall as a well and as wide as a church door, as Bill Sharkspire puts it, and the smutty little cuss Joe'd fired the rock at.

"That's them!" he squeals, p'intin' his grimy little finger at us. "I seen 'em do it!"

Immejitly he went up in my estimation sev'ral hundred per-cent, for *he* was that unconsidered trifle.

"Now I'm sorry I didn't plug 'im when I had the chance," Joe growls, passin' him a glance that ought to withered him up like a feather in the fiery furnace. "What is it happens to the merciful feller in the Scriptures?"

"I dunno what happens to him *there*," I replies, gettin' a glimpse of a copper star the size of a saucer on the high suspender of our escort as he hustled us up the bank and across the field, "but he cert'nly gets jailed *here*. This gent's the *law*."

I was right; he was—a vurry abrupt law at that.

He took us up to the lock-up, located on the second floor of an annex to a liv'ry stable, and before stowing us away, went through our duds in the most approved Central Office style. I could 'a' helped him by declarin' nothin' dutiable, but he wa'n't satisfied until he'd gone the route alone. And you can imagine my feelin's when he dove down into the little waist-band pocket of them free-and-easy pants of mine—garments I hadn't occupied long enough myself to get wise to their failin's—and abstracted a dollar note and forty-seven cents in coin.

For an instant I was tempted to wrassel him for the purse, winner to take all, but before I could pick out the tenderest place on him to tackle first, he'd crowded us both into the only cell the jail afforded—and had the door padlocked.

I've been in cells before, but nothin'

quite so congested as that one. In order to let me have room to spread out my grief over that dollar forty-seven, Joe had to climb the grated door until the atmosphere'd cleared a bit.

While he was goin' through his displeasure exercise, I leaned against the door and pondered. And as I done so, I noticed it was a cheap iron affair of quarter-inch slats, riveted together by the village blacksmith so's to form four or five-inch squares; and so flexible in the center that as I shoved against it, it sprung out almost enough to let me push my arm out.

"Say," I says casual-like to Joe, "ye don't s'pose he intends this piece of lattice work to be any barrier to freedom, do ye?"

"Why," he replies, "aint it a perfectly good door?"

"It might be to a feller sufferin' from paral' sis," I says, "but not to a couple of husky gents facin' four years or more for desertion."

"Is this the greatest obstacle we've got to overcome?" he interrogates, gettin' up and addin' his hundred and sixty pounds to mine.

"This and a fifteen foot drop from a window we passed comin' in," I responds.

"Let's get at it!" he says, eager-like.

"Easy, now, easy!" I cautions. "We don't want to bring that dollar forty-seven back on account of any unseemly racket; let's do it kinder scientifically."

The place was about eight feet long. By Joe's settin' down on the floor with his knees bent up, and me with my feet on his shoulders and my own shoulder against the door where the resistance was the least, somethin' had to give—or I had to telescope. By the fourth shove it'd bent out a foot, and when he got his knees down to their best lev'rage, out she bulged enough to've throwed a bale of hay through.

It didn't take us long to reach the window I'd noticed, and five minutes later we were leavin' the locality of that liv'ry stable at a four minute gait, with our faces turned toward the Mason-Dixon Line—where the chickens aint educated in the higher branches and every smoke house don't wear a time lock.



Photograph by White, New York

A scene from "Little Miss Fix-It," the new musical-comedy by W. J. Hurlbut and Harry B. Smith in which Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth are starring

IN AN address which he delivered nearly three years ago at a conference in the interest of dramatic art, Mr. Augustus Thomas ventured a prediction that at a future time, not far distant, a great and vital drama would be written on the theme of the Jew in American life—not the shrewd, alert, expeditious Jew who is rapidly dominating the business of this nation and regulating its complicated commercial machinery to respond to his will, but the Jew as a factor in the domestic life of the people and in his beneficent, philosophical relation to humanity. No deeper or more profound subject waits ready-made at the door of the thoughtful dramatist, said Mr. Thomas, and none will deliver a more powerful or impressive message when the playwright arrives who is capable of improving this great opportunity.

The professional writer for the theatre, as experience has proved, is not always an infallible prophet, just as the critic of the stage, however extensive may be his observation and equipment,

is not always an unerring judge. But it is interesting to record, as it is also just to concede, that the great play of the Jew in his humanitarian aspect has arrived and that Mr. Thomas himself is its author. No drama that occupies the New York stage at this writing invites closer consideration or is capable of exercising more powerful influence than "As A Man Thinks," now in the early days of its performances; and no play of the present season which deals with topics of the contemporaneous hour is comparable with it. To seek its equal among the productions of native dramatists I find I must go back three years to "The Witching Hour," a process which also has its significance since Mr. Thomas, too, was the author of that splendid psychological work. Together they stamp him as the foremost writer for the stage in this country and one who stands shoulder to shoulder with the best of the contemporary dramatists who are expressing themselves in the English language.

What are the distinguishing qualities

of "As A Man Thinks" to which, after several weeks' reflection, I am inclined to give such unqualified praise? Its first uncommonly conspicuous merit is its truthful representation of a vital and reasonable episode in the every-day life around us. Yet even this quality would not suffice if it did not also reach beneath the surface of life and uncover the directing forces of impulse and motive. Its arguments and conclusions show it to be the result of profound and deliberate philosophic thought and of long and minute observation of human nature. Another of its attributes is that its characters are not conventional abstractions of the playwright, but normal men and women whose actions are ruled by strength and weakness in their natural ratio. Its story lends itself, by reason of conflicting interests, to dramatic treatment, and this, perhaps, is its cardinal virtue, since the proof of the play must ever be in the acting. Technically it is a finished and subtle piece of stagecraft, while in the delicacy and fluency of the writing it is a work of literary art. And its performance could scarcely be improved under present conditions which rule in the theatre.

Against these fine qualities of "As A Man Thinks" it may be argued that Mr. Thomas's propensity for didactic interludes gives his play something of a sermonizing effect. But the other fact is also true that the sermon never ceases to be drama. Occasionally the story is developed by use of coincidence, but this subterfuge is never obtrusive. If Mr. Thomas's keen sense of the theatre has tempted him to weaken his final act with a somewhat arbitrary happy ending, it cannot be charged that his conclusions are strained. They give the play a tone of healthy optimism.

In the scheme of the action the dominant character of *Dr. Samuel Seelig* stands somewhat aloof from the romantic interest of the plot. He is an advanced Jew who has progressed intellectually beyond a narrow and arbitrary orthodoxy but he retains an intense pride in his race. In personal traits he represents the highest and finest humanitarianism. By reason of his professional relation as the physician and confidant

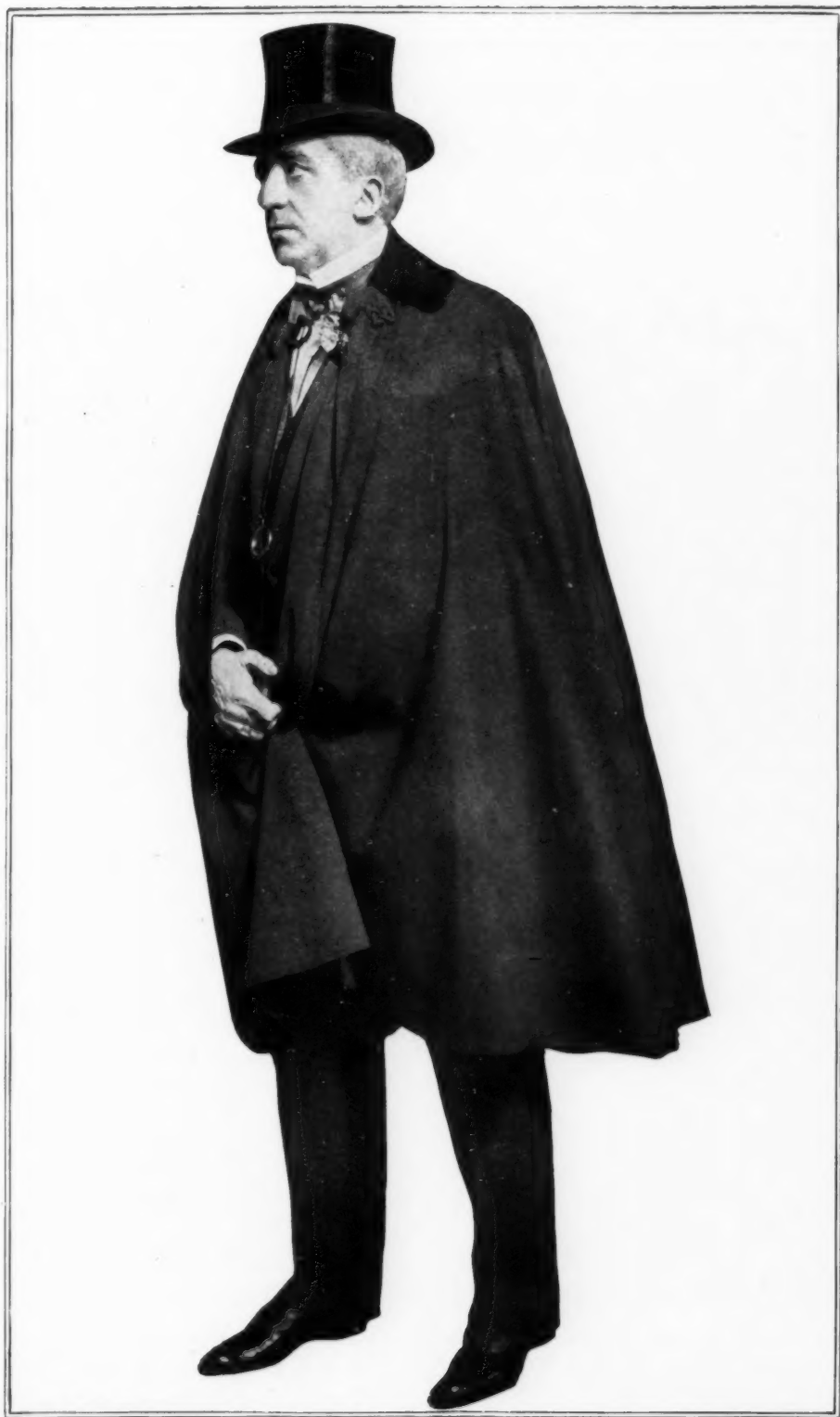
of *Mr. and Mrs. Frank Clayton* he is able to become their friend and guide in a bitter domestic embroilment. In the larger message of the play his mission is to prove the power of the Golden Rule, not only in the relations of the sexes but in the racial contact of Jew and Gentile.

*Frank Clayton* and his wife have been married nine years and have a young child. It soon develops that their life has been made unhappy by *Mrs. Clayton's* discovery that her husband, who is a publisher of magazines, has been guilty of irregular conduct in Paris, a sin which he holds to be pardonable in a man but not to be condoned in a woman. She has forgiven him once, only to learn, through a slip made by *Benjamin De Lota*, a Jew and art critic employed by Clayton, that it has been repeated. It is well to add that *De Lota* is engaged to marry *Vedah Seelig*, the daughter of *Dr. Seelig*, although she loves him only half-heartedly, secretly preferring *Julian Burrill*, a young sculptor who, however, is opposed by her father because he is a Gentile. *Burrill* knows of *De Lota's* disgraceful past but is too honorable to make use of such information in his courtship.

Driven to desperation by *Clayton's* insistence upon a double standard of morality in the relation of the sexes, *Mrs. Clayton* seeks revenge by going to the rooms of *De Lota*, who had been her admirer in earlier years but was rejected at the demand of her father, *Judge Hoover*, because of his race. Although no great harm comes from the meeting, the wife's whereabouts are accidentally discovered by *Clayton*, who flies into a rage, denounces her as unworthy and unfaithful, even expresses a doubt as to the paternity of their child, and begins an action for divorce.

It is at this crisis that the wise, philosophical *Dr. Seelig* hurls his powerful influence against the couple's domestic troubles. He, too, is a believer in an unequal responsibility of the sexes. In a scene which is remarkable for its grasp of the meaning of life, no less than of its knowledge of human nature, he expounds his social doctrine based on the text that "on the standard of woman's





Photograph by Hall, New York

John Mason as *Dr Samuel Seelig* in Augustus Thomas' new play, "*As A Man Thinks*"



Photograph by Hall, New York

John Flood as *Frank Clayton*, Miss Charlotte Ives as *Vedah Seelig*, Miss Amelia Gardner as *Mrs. Seelig* and Vincent Serrano as *Julian Burrill* in Augustus Thomas' new play, "*As A Man Thinks*"

virtue rests the welfare of the world." Yet his indictment is not wholly against the woman. In another eloquent argument directed against the husband, he holds that every litigant in the great court of human nature must come before the bar of justice with clean hands. One powerful situation succeeds another as the climax is approached, the learned Jewish physician occupying the middle ground and pleading, but seemingly without avail, for generosity, fair play and justice.

In the final act *Clayton* is alone in his beautiful home, broken in health and spirit, and nursing his hatred against his wife who, with her child, has gone to *Dr. Seelig's* house pending the divorce proceedings. *Dr. Seelig* undertakes to treat his case on the principle of what, for a better term, may be termed psychological therapeutics—the influence of

hatred and mental unrest as a poison to the physical body, and the curative effect over physical illness of the application of the tenets of the Sermon on the Mount. He has also induced *De Lota* to make the humiliating confession that he has served a term of imprisonment in France, which establishes the falsity of *Clayton's* suspicion of the parentage of his child. So when the little boy calls on the telephone to say that he is coming home for Christmas Eve, the father has softened sufficiently to ask him to bring his mother also. A final test of *Dr. Seelig's* philosophy comes at the last moment in the play, when it develops that his daughter *Vedah* has eloped with her Gentile sweetheart, *Burrill*. It is a severe blow to *Dr. Seelig's* one remaining trace of racial prejudice but he submits with gentle dignity and resignation.



Miss Chrystal Herne, who is playing the rôle of *Mrs. Clayton*, with John Mason in "*As A Man Thinks*"

No synopsis of the story, which is unusual in its simplicity, can indicate the subcurrents of philosophic thought which are the sources of its power and appeal. This deeper meaning is brought boldly to the surface by Mr. John Mason's ideal representation of the Jewish physician, by Mr. John Flood's almost as forceful impersonation of the offending husband, and by Miss Chrystal Herne's sensitive portrayal of the falsely suspected wife. Mr. Vincent Serrano and Mr. Walter Hale, the first as *Burrill*, the sculptor, the second as *De Lota*, the critic, are also capital. Miss Amelia Gardner acts the small but important character of *Mrs. Seelig* uncommonly well. Miss Charlotte Ives does all that is necessary for the rôle of *Dr. Seelig's* daughter, while Mr. William Sampson is exceedingly happy in affording the needed comic relief as the bigoted and explosive *Judge Hoover*. Perhaps it is unnecessary to add that there are four acts, laid alternately in the homes of *Dr. Seelig* and *Frank Clayton* in a fashionable thoroughfare in New York.

IT IS recorded that Miss Mary Garden, the most luscious *Thais* of them all in the late operatic reign of Mr. Oscar Hammerstein, when she first looked upon Miss Constance Collier as the Magdalene of Alexandria and Mr. Tyrone Power as *Daniel*, the unkempt anchorite and religious fanatic of the Theban desert, in Mr. Paul Wiltach's dramatic version of M. Anatole France's novel, straightway abandoned herself to a temperamental outburst of ecstatic rapture. Well, Mary ought to know. Has she not climbed to the loftiest emotional pinnacle of "*Thais*" on the golden rungs of Massenet's musical ladder?

Others may hold differing opinions regarding the play. It is one of those glittering, tinsel spectacles which soars on the wings of well-rounded metaphor and cold, formal prose poetry in the rarefied atmosphere of superheated imagination. Those who admire it at all will enjoy it greatly. To others who prefer a dash of homely but natural vitality in their theatrical diversion, it will not appeal so forcibly. Its assault upon the emotions of its audiences will

be mainly through their eyes. Yet it would be an injustice not to record that Mr. Wiltach has used excellent judgment in selecting episodes from the novel and he has welded them into a play of strong dramatic contrasts, the principal characters of which are vividly drawn and the writing of which is always fluent and sometimes eloquent and dignified. As for its comparative value to Massenet's opera—but I am not a musical critic. The extent to which I shall commit myself is a prophecy that the play will be popular with all who discovered true works of dramatic art in "*Ben Hur*," "*Quo Vadis*?" "*The Shepherd King*," "*The Sign of the Cross*" and other dramas of that illustrious line.

The story of "*Thais*" has become so widely known through the novel of M. France and the operatic setting composed by M. Massenet that it is scarcely necessary to describe in detail the successive steps by which is reached that final pitiful exclamation by the Theban monk who fights and wins the battle against carnal weakness: "Great is the miracle that sent me to save *Thais*, the courtesan, that I might be saved by *Thais*, the saint!" Mr. Wiltach divides his play into four acts, whereas the opera libretto contains only three. In the first are shown the rude huts of the hermit monks on the sunbaked sands of the desert. To the fanatical *Daniel*, who has chosen exile to escape the temptations of ungodly, luxury-loving Alexandria, appears a vision of the pagan courtesan, *Thais*, the sinful companion of the wild days of his youth, and he registers a fanatical vow to reclaim her soul. As a stage picture this panorama of arid, parched wilderness, with its cluster of rough, low hermit cells, is by far the most artistic in the play.

Anon comes *Daniel* in tattered sackcloth, unshorn, unwashed and hollow-eyed, before the regal palace of *Thais* on the shore of the Mediterranean. The scene is one of Oriental splendor. The jeweled courtesan, upon whom the Roman *Nicias* has lavished the wealth of a kingdom, is holding high revel in the midst of a throng of dissolute admirers. They jeer at the zealous ascetic and give





Photographs by White, New York

Arthur Forrest as *Nicias*, Miss Constance Collier as *Thais*, and Tyrone Power as *Darius* in "Thais"

cruel and ribald jests in return for his righteous anger and thunderous words of shame and warning. But *Daniel* will not be denied. He will starve and wait at the palace gate until *Thais* heeds his prayers.

Now it is night and *Thais* is reclining on a rich couch in the Temple of Love in her garden. Her soul is torn with conflicting emotions. The battle is on between the good and evil impulses of her nature. She is ready to listen to *Daniel's* feverish word pictures of the wrath to come. The monk's ecstasy increases to frenzy and the woman rises and silently follows him.

Lastly the Retreat of the White Sisters in an oasis of the desert. *Thais* now wears the spotless habit of the nuns. But *Daniel*, the strong, has been overcome by carnal weakness and he is whispering words of worldly love into her ear. *Thais* does not hear. The thread of life has snapped and released her redeemed soul from the wasted, weary body. It is then that *Daniel* realizes his transgression and speaks the words already quoted.

Three characters would suffice to perform the play, although at times a hundred or more figures crowd the stage. Mr. Power as *Daniel* reveals all his uncommon ability of dramatic suggestion and draws a vivid picture, first of ecstatic devotion, then of mingled righteous rage and spiritual agony, and finally of abject despair and delirious humiliation. Miss Collier as *Thais* has no power of dramatic suggestion whatever. To typify the courtesan she must descend to literal coarseness in manner, speech and dress. As for the matter of dress, she wears as little as possible. No actress could safely drape herself in less. Miss Collier might learn much by observing Miss Julia Marlowe in the character of *Salome*. The only other important rôle is *Nicias*, the Roman admirer of *Thais*, played by Mr. Arthur Forrest. He still enjoys a monopoly in Roman patricians on the American stage. In this instance he seems possessed of a mistaken idea that he is impersonating a peacock or a butterfly. As a sartorial exhibit of embroidered togas he outclasses the most skillful cloak model.

"*Thais*" is sure to appeal to the religiously inclined among theatre-goers. It is a play in which Satan and Sanctity travel in double harness under the lash of Conscience. Thus does the stage adroitly whip the devil around a stump!

IT is curious to note that the younger generation of comedy writers, when they endeavor to present on the stage a character of peculiar eccentricity or humorous mendacity, usually locate its origin in the circumspect state of Indiana. This uncomplimentary distinction paid to the mid-continent novelistic belt is undeserved, of course, but it falls in conveniently with the prejudices of the East.

Mr. Harry James Smith, a newcomer in the literary arena of the playhouse, who has fitted Mrs. Fiske with her spring comedy, "*Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh*," has followed the recently manufactured tradition and made his heroine hail from Missionary Loop, Ind. Then, in compliance with a somewhat older convention, he has laid the scenes of the play in the Long Island country-house of a family of snobbish New Yorkers. The comedy itself is not expert but anything that the clever Mrs. Fiske attempts is sure of attention, and she is certainly most amusing as *Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh*—a sort of home-grown *Becky Sharp*. The purpose of the piece is to satirize false family pride no less than vulgar social climbers, and this it accomplishes fairly well with the aid of its sharply written passages of dialogue.

*Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh* is the expeditious and unscrupulous daughter of old *Jim Sayles*, Missionary Loop's patent medicine fakir and quack doctor, whose nostrums have not been efficacious in his own case, since he has died and left a fair-sized fortune. Being ambitious to rise in the world, she then changes the family name to *De Salle*, with made-to-order but illustrious connections in France, and starts with her vulgar, old mother and frank, sincere sister on a social career. Eventually she marries an aristocratic English parson and, when the play opens, is back in America at the home of the *Rawsons*, scheming to make a match between their son, *Anthony*, and



Photograph by  
Byron, New York

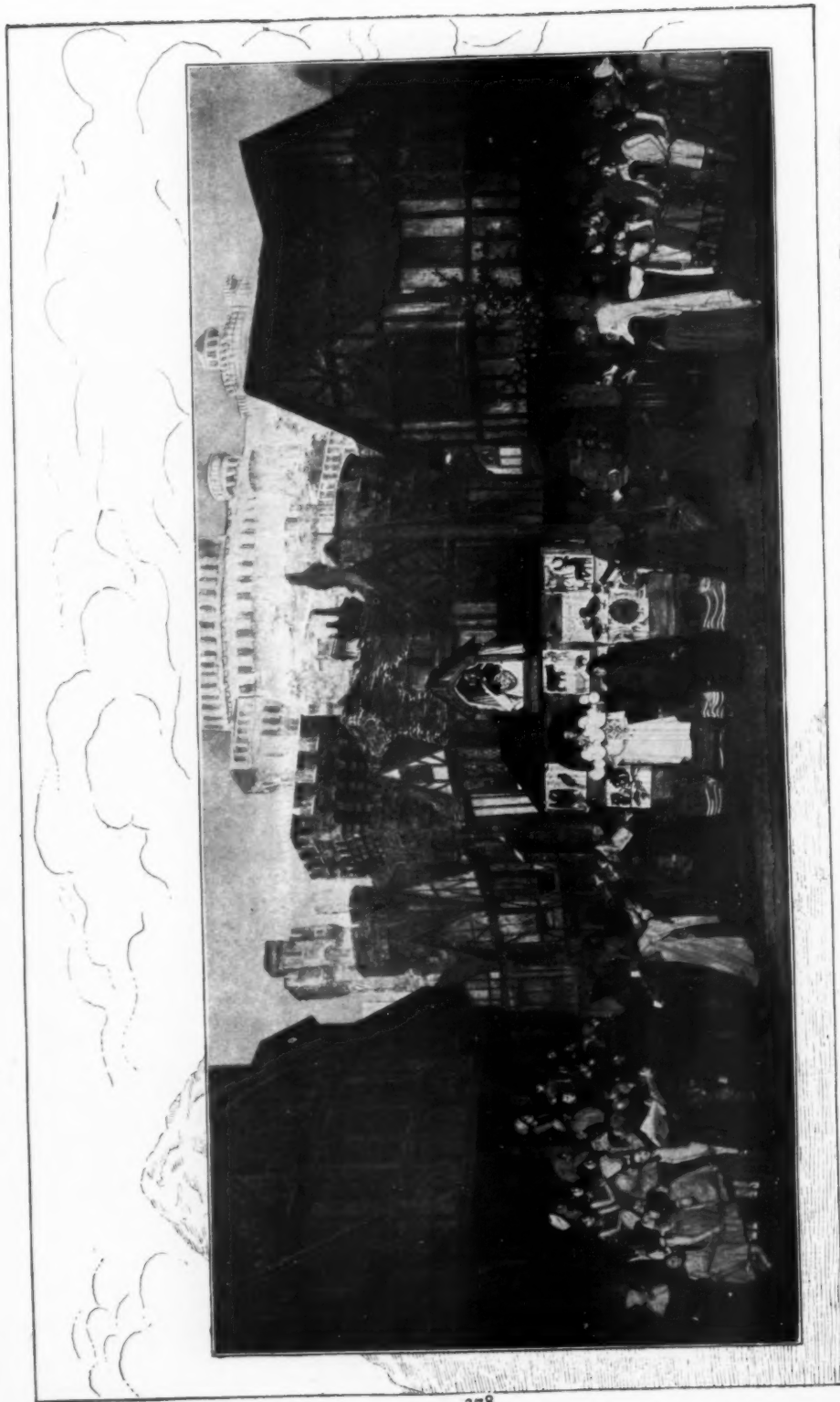
Mrs. Fiske as *Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh*, in the play of that title, and Kathlene MacDonell as her sister,  
*Violet De Salle*

her sister, *Violet*. The *Rawsons* are delighted at the prospect of their ne'er-do-well son's marriage into the foreign aristocracy, but it happens that *Anthony's* rough but decent brother, *Geoffrey*, is the only one who appreciates *Violet De Salle's* worth and is really in love with her.

The story runs along nimbly for a time. It is at its best when *Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh* suddenly drops her English accent and affectations for innate vulgarity in her heart-to-heart conferences with her family over the coming marriage. Mrs. Fiske's "Say, Maw, dry up!" is spoken as if to the manner born, and in all her spirited sets-to with the old lady she shows that she still retains a firm grip on her former light-comedy

vein of acting. In these scenes and in her quick shifts back to circumspectness she is capital.

The crisis in *Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh's* campaign of imposture comes when *Peter Swallow*, a tombstone drummer from Missionary Loop, puts in an unexpected appearance at the country-house. He had been her swain in the old days and she had cruelly jilted him. But she brazenly out the meeting so audaciously that he is unable to identify her. With *Swallow's* arrival Mr. Henry E. Dixey, who impersonates this breezy character, practically takes the play out of Mrs. Fiske's hands, for the second act becomes almost an uninterrupted monologue for him. By the time this battle of wits is ended, *Violet*, the



Photograph by Byron, New York  
A scene from the oldest play in the English language, "Noah's Flood," as recently presented in New York by members of the New Theatre company



younger sister, has become disgusted at the deception which *Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh* is perpetrating and blurts out the plain truth about her humble origin and

whole dissembling crew out of the house. Meanwhile *Violet's* love affair with young *Geoffrey* has been progressing and he exhibits his good sense by



Photograph by White, New York

Miss Alice Dovey as *Angele* in "The Pink Lady"

the family's former activities at Missionary Loop, all of which leads to the most effective episode in the play when the horrified *Rawsons* straightway order the

promptly offering to marry her. The enterprising *Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh* by this time has resurrected a skeleton from *Anthony Rawson's* closet and by holding

it as a blackmailing threat over the rich family is enabled to retire in triumph.

It is delightful to find Mrs. Fiske's fingers playing lightly on the keys of humorous character again. She is a dynamo of nervous energy when she sets herself in motion. By the sheer vivacity of her acting she is able, in a measure, to disguise the improbability of the scenes in which she figures. Three or four of the other characters are cleverly sketched and these are performed by Miss Florine Arnol as *Mrs. De Salle*, otherwise *Mrs. Sayles*; Miss Kathlene Mac Donell as *Violet*, Charles Harbury as the elder *Rawson*, Malcolm Duncan and Douglas J. Wood as his two sons, and Mr. Dixie as the loquacious and effusive *Peter Swallow*.

THERE were no delighted cries of "Author! Author!" after the performance of "Noah's Flood." Of course not! The musty bones of the pious old monk who first scrawled its primitive sing-song dialogue on parchment had mouldered in the crypt of some ancient English cathedral two whole centuries before Christopher Columbus turned the prows of his caravels toward the undiscovered New World. Yet with what joy would his heart have throbbed, could he have heard the applause which followed this most ancient mystery play in the English language at the New Theatre! A record of the stage's most significant events would be sadly incomplete without a reference to this luscious novelty out of the misty past.

Into a public square in old Windsor town, thronged with its populace in mediaeval dress, a band of strolling players wheeled a rude ark. It resembled a dilapidated dog kennel, except that on one side were a door and window, while it was surmounted by a cupola through which a golden-faced image of the *Deity* adorned with whiskers of shimmering silver presently peered. In sepulchral tones he thundered to the mimic audience that "mankind is foully set in sin" and therefore he had determined to destroy every human inhabitant of the earth except Noah and his family, who had faithfully done his bidding.

At this ominous prophecy of the Flood

old *Noah*, whose beard resembled a hearth rug, became extraordinarily busy. Out from the ark streamed *Mrs. Noah*, her sons *Shem*, *Ham* and *Japhet*, and their wives, frightened by the thunder-claps and rainfall which an archangel with cardboard wings imitated by shaking pebbles in a barrel.

There was swift work to be done. To *Shem*, *Ham* and *Japhet* fell the task of loading two each of all the animal species of the earth into the ark, while their wives improved the fleeting hour by calking up the craft and getting the provisions aboard. The accomplishment of the menagerie feat wasn't quite so difficult as it seemed to be in advance, since the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air were only weirdly colored figures painted on placards.

Old *Mrs. Noah*, from the first, showed a most provoking perversity of disposition. She was a sour-visaged, sharp-tongued old shrew in a peaked cap, who wanted to sit on the ground and gossip with the neighbors. Vainly did *Noah* belabor her with a stuffed club. Vainly, too, did the golden-faced *Deity* admonish her from the cupola. Ferociously did she attack her ancient spouse with tooth and nail. The rising waters succeeded where their persuasion had failed and soon she gathered her skirts around her bare legs and scampered aboard.

After a moment out came *Noah's* head from the window to announce that forty days had passed and that the waters had begun to abate. With quaint pantomime he released an imaginary raven to find the land. Then he pretended to send forth a white dove which, with an olive branch from Mount Ararat, the *Deity* presently dangled in front of his face at the end of a string from the cupola above. Whereupon *Mr.* and *Mrs. Noah* and their progeny clambered out of the ark and scattered its cargo of animal pictures over the ground, while the solemn voice of the *Deity* from the cupola proclaimed the miracle.

Do not reach the conclusion that so much as a shade of modern irreverence marred this earliest play that is known to English dramatic literature—a play that was two centuries old before the ancient morality, "Everyman," was per-



Photograph by White, New York  
Miss Louise Kelly as *La Comtesse*, Miss Alice Hegeman as *Madame Dondrier*, Frank Lator as *Philippe Dondrier* and William Elliott as *Lucian* in "The Pink Lady"

formed by the priests in the churches. On the contrary, it was acted with solemn reverence. It showed, among other things, that our twelfth-century forefathers were blessed with a sense of humor that did not differ much from our own in the present day. And it betrayed, alas, where Mr. George M. Cohan and Mr. George V. Hobart, and possibly Mr. George Ade, have been going for some of their jokes. In "Noah's Flood" *Shem's* wife even makes one merry quip at the expense of her mother-in-law!

For the sake of record it should be added that Mr. Ben Johnson appeared as the golden-visaged and sonorous-voiced *Deity*, while Mr. Louis Calvert,

disguised in a sheep pelt, was *Mr. Noah*, who spared not the rod upon the wife of his bosom whom Mr. Ferdinand Gottschalk impersonated most amusingly.

**I**F musical-comedy keeps up its present rate of improvement it will soon be storing up tradition for its future guidance. The latest of a series of hits which has extended throughout the whole season is "The Pink Lady," with sparkling melodies by Mr. Ivan Caryll and a libretto by Mr. C. M. S. Mc Lellan, adapted from the French farce, "Le Satyr," by MM. Georges Berr and Marcell Guillemaud. Even without its music it would still be an amusing play,



Photograph by White, New York

Miss Annie Buckley as *Mary Ann* and Miss Nora Bayes as *Delia Wendell* in "Little Miss Fix-It"





Photograph by Sarony, New York

Miss Hazel Dawn, a famous American-English beauty who is playing *Claudine* in "The Pink Lady"

for it has a definite plot and its characters are more than personal exhibits of the people performing them. Every song, besides being entertaining on its own account, helps the story along. A young fellow about to be married,

is having a good-by luncheon with an old flame in the Forest of Compiègne near Paris when he is surprised by his fiancée and called to account. To escape from his predicament he explains that his companion is a messenger from a business client who has been unable to keep an appointment and, when pressed for names and further information, mentions an old antiquary whose shop is in the Rue Saint Honore. To discourage investigation of his story he adds that the shopkeeper is a "satyr" which, with the French, is a synonym for a flirtatious old reprobate.

It remains for the culprit to make good his excuses; he carries all concerned to the antique shop and introduces Mr. Frank Lalor as *Philippe Dondidier*, a quiet and inoffensive old bourgeois who is induced, at the price of getting possession of a rare old snuff box, to pose as the rampant heart-wrecker. A great many grotesque complications ensue and the piece winds up with the Ball of the Nymphs and Satyrs at the Cafe Les Satyres where sufficient explanations are made and the distracted old *Dondidier* is permitted to resume his harmless pursuits.

The nicety with which "The Pink Lady" is cast is not the least source of its attractiveness. In this respect it rivals some of the best productions of the London Gaiety Theatre—the English hothouse in which some of the most fragrant blooms of musical comedy are grown. Indeed it is probable that a replica of the entertainment will be produced there during the Coronation festivities.

Out of seventeen musical numbers there is scarcely one that could be spared. "The Girl By The Saskatchewan" is one of the neatest of the sentimental songs and "Donny Did, Donny Didn't" leads the funny ditties. As the waltz measure this year has returned to its former popularity, thanks to the new crop of Viennese composers, "The Kiss Waltz" will be the melody which will receive the attention of dance orchestras during the summer resort season.

"The Pink Lady" brings us a new celebrity in its title rôle. She is Miss Hazel Dawn, a Utah beauty who has

come by way of London and whose personality does not belie her roseate name. A contrasting charmer is Miss Alice Dovey, whose magnetism is felt whenever she is on the stage. Mr. William Elliott, who made the great hit in "Madame X" a year ago, is also in the cast in the juvenile rôle. The fun of the piece, however, proceeds from Mr. Lalor, Miss Alice Hegeman and Mr. Fred Wright, Jr., at whose antics one may laugh unrestrainedly and not regret it afterwards.

MISS Nora Bayes and Mr. Jack Norworth have again extended their vaudeville vogue to the musical-comedy stage in "Little Miss Fix-It," a wisp of a piece which Mr. William J. Hurlbut and Mr. Harry B. Smith have designed for them, the sole object of which seems to be to keep them before the audience constantly. While it is never good musical-comedy, it is always far from bad vaudeville. There is also a freshness about its settings which helps to make it attractive. It does not aim high in the scale of the spring entertainments but it serves its purpose.

Miss Bayes is a busy-body matron who adds unintentionally to the misunderstandings of sundry folk by her misdirected efforts to adjust their differences. The characters are grouped in pairs who are "almost divorced," "almost married," "almost engaged," "almost grown up," etc., while the chorus consists of "almost suffragettes" and "almost guests." Aëroplanes, automobiles and other luxuries of the hour are scattered about in great profusion.

Of course *Little Miss Fix-It* arranges all her friends' affairs satisfactorily at the last curtain. This she accomplishes generally by singing to them. "No More Staying Out Late;" "A Garden In Sweden," with an oddly arranged refrain which is a long list of names of flowers; "Fine Strawberries," and "Months and Months" are some of the songs.

Mr. William Danforth, Mr. Lionel Walsh, Mr. James C. Lane, Miss Oza Waldrop, Miss Grace Field, and Miss Vivian Rushmore are some of the company, so the piece does not lack for clever performers.